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THURSDAY
February 5, 2026

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Vol. 57 • No. 30

RNI No. KARENG/1970/49945

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Years of poor planning have made Bengaluru a traffic nightmare

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TITLE DECIDER

Jemimah's DC takes on Smriti's RCB

SPORT » PAGE 17

NEARBY

Namma Metro fares hiked by 5%

BENGALURU

Bengaluru metro commuters are set to face an increase in travel costs, with fares scheduled to rise by 5% from February 9. The revision will push the minimum ticket price to ₹11 and the maximum fare to ₹95, even as commuters remain unhappy about last year's hike. » PAGE 3

C.T. Ravi suspended from Council for a day

BENGALURU

Senior BJP member C.T. Ravi on Wednesday was suspended from the Legislative Council for his remarks on the floor of the House on Tuesday. The suspension came in the absence of the member.

» PAGE 8

Manipur President's Rule ends; Khemchand new CM

Will prioritise peace, says the Chief Minister; BJP's Kuki-Zo member Nemcha Kipgen and Losii Dikho of the Naga People's Front sworn in as Deputy CMs; two more MLAs take oath as Ministers

Rahul Karmakar
GUWAHATI

The installation of a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led National Democratic Alliance government, with a Meitei leader at the helm, brought an end to nearly a year of President's Rule in Manipur on Wednesday.

Around 6 p.m., Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla administered the oath of office to former Assembly Speaker and martial artist Yumnam Khemchand Singh as the State's second Chief Minister since the 2022 election. The first, Nongthombam Biren Singh, resigned on February 9, 2025, following the ethnic conflict between the Kuki-Zo and Meitei communities that broke out on May 3, 2023. The swearing-in ceremony followed the revocation of President's Rule, which was imposed on February 13, 2025.

New role: Yumnam Khemchand Singh arrives at the Imphal airport ahead of taking oath as Chief Minister on Wednesday. ANI

Mr. Khemchand Singh represents the BJP from the Singjamei constituency.

The BJP's Kangpokpi MLA, Nemcha Kipgen, from the Kuki-Zo community, and Naga People's Front MLA Losii Dikho, a Naga leader representing the Mao constituency, were sworn in as Deputy Chief Ministers. The former took the oath virtually from Manipur Bhavan in New Delhi.

Two other Meitei MLAs – Govindas Konthoujam of the BJP (Bishnupur) and Khuraijam Loken Singh of the National People's Party (Wangoi) – were sworn in as Ministers at the Lok Bhavan in Manipur's capital, Imphal. "There will always be challenges. We will prioritise peace and work for the State's development and growth," Mr. Khemchand Singh said after swearing in.

Congratulating the new Chief Minister and his team, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, "I'm confident they will work diligently towards furthering development and prosperity for my sisters and brothers of Manipur."

CONTINUED ON
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EDITORIAL
» PAGE 10

Denied phone use, 3 minor girls jump off balcony in Ghaziabad

Alisha Dutta
NEW DELHI

Three minor sisters ended their life early on Wednesday after jumping off the balcony of a ninth-floor flat in Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh, as their parents had restricted mobile phone usage, the police said.

Nishika (16), Prachi (14), and Pakhi (12) were found dead on the pavement in the gated community a little after 2 a.m.

According to the police, a note was found which said: "True life story: whatever is written in this diary, all of that is true, read it now. Sorry papa, I'm really sorry."

During their investigation, the police learnt that the children had dropped out of school in 2020, and were addicted to social media, cartoons, and Korean TV shows and music.

To break the addiction, the parents had restricted their mobile phone access for the past few days.

The residential building in Ghaziabad where three sisters died. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

"Annoyed with their addiction, the parents took away the phone a few days ago and threatened the girls that they would be married off," said Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Nimish Patil.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 12

Both Houses pass resolution seeking reinstatement of MGNREGA

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Amid protests and walkout by the Opposition BJP and JD(S), both Houses of the Karnataka Legislature on Wednesday passed a resolution urging the Central government to repeal the new Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act, 2025, and reinstate its predecessor MGNREGA in its original form.

Amid non-stop interruptions and slogan shouting by the Opposition, the Speaker allowed a debate on the resolution. Before it was put to vote, Leader of Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashok opposed it and the members staged a walkout. It was passed by voice vote.

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 8

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Statement of Unaudited Financial Results for the Quarter and Nine Months Ended 31.12.2025

Particulars	Quarter Ended 31st Dec 2025	Quarter Ended 31st Dec 2024	Change / Growth%
CASA	15,847	13,788	14.94%
DEPOSIT	56,707	50,392	12.53%
RAM	47,706	40,329	18.29%
ADVANCE	50,763	43,650	16.30%
TOTAL BUSINESS	1,07,470	94,042	14.28%
OPERATING PROFIT	468.22	407.71	14.84%
NET PROFIT	341.50	300.24	13.74%
NIM (%)	4.04%	4.00%	4 bps
ROA (%)	1.97%	1.89%	8 bps
GROSS NPA	0.91%	1.32%	41 bps
NET NPA	0.20%	0.41%	21 bps

₹ in crore

Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended 31.12.2025 (Unaudited)	Quarter Ended 30.09.2025 (Unaudited)	Quarter Ended 31.12.2024 (Unaudited)	Nine Months Ended 31.12.2025 (Unaudited)	Nine Months Ended 31.12.2024 (Unaudited)	Year Ended 31.03.2025 (Audited)
1.	Total Income from Operations	1665.42	1621.46	1519.94	4904.35	4599.69	6141.75
2.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax,Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	466.74	432.42	404.44	1303.08	1188.11	1574.89
3.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before Tax, (after Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	466.74	432.42	404.44	1303.08	1188.11	1574.89
4.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after Tax, (after Exceptional and /or Extraordinary items)	341.50	317.51	300.24	963.90	890.71	1182.61
5.	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax) and other comprehensive Income (after tax)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
6.	Equity Share Capital	158.35	158.35	158.35	158.35	158.35	158.35
7.	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the previous Year	-	-	-	-	-	8850.34
8.	Earnings Per Share (of Rs.10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations)						
	a) Basic:	*21.57	*20.05	*18.96	*60.87	*56.25	74.68
	b) Diluted:	*21.57	*20.05	*18.96	*60.87	*56.25	74.68

*Not annualised

NOTE: 1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly / Half yearly Financial Results filed with Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly/ Half yearly Financial Results is available on the website of the Stock Exchange(s) (www.nseindia.com and www.bseindia.com) and on the Bank's Website (www.tmb.bank.in). 2. Information relating to Total comprehensive income and other comprehensive income is not furnished as Ind-AS is not yet made applicable to banks. Place: Thoothukudi Date: 04.02.2026

For and on behalf of Board of Directors,
SALEE S NAIR
Managing Director & CEO

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The SKY is blue again

Suryakumar used the time between the end of the South Africa series and the start of the New Zealand showdown most judiciously, assiduously working to rediscover his mojo

EMMANUAL YOGINI

R. Kaushik

What do you do when you hit a trough? When what was once second nature has gone missing, not for a day or a week or a month, but for an entire year? When the runs dry up, when your signature strokes desert you, when the individual failures start to stack up even if, under you, the team is doing magical things?

Go back to the drawing board, for sure, but also work extra hard to keep negativity at bay, to disassociate yourself from the dangerous gremlins of self-doubt, right?

That's easier said than done, of course. Not going back to the drawing board, because that's what professional sportspersons do when they are confronted by rare failure. But how do you maintain the veneer of positivity when you know that you are letting yourself and the team down, no matter how patient and understanding they might be?

Primary vocation

Suryakumar Yadav is nothing if not a proud individual, a proud captain, a proud leader of men. Even as he steered India from one victory to another, including an unbeaten run culminating in the Asia Cup crown in the Emirates in September, he must have hurt badly at not being able to contribute with the bat. His primary vocation is as a batter, which is what earned him the leadership role in the first place. "I don't mind not scoring so long as the team wins," is a very politically correct statement, but Suryakumar was fooling no one. He wanted badly to score, to leave his mark, to turn the clock back and to emerge as a more fearsome version of the marauding self that once ruled the T20 ecosystem.

And therefore, as 2025 segued into 2026, the 35-year-old found the equanimity to take failure in his stride, aware that there was nothing he could do to correct the past but also flush with the realisation that he would not allow the immediate past to define him. A new, exciting challenge awaited him in the new year - the opportunity to emulate Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Rohit Sharma and become only the third Indian captain to lift the T20 World Cup. That he would have the chance to do so on home turf - Dhoni's success came in South Africa in 2007, Rohit's in Barbados in 2024 - was an added fillip.

For the whole of 2025, it was as if someone answering to the name of Suryakumar Yadav, resembling him physically but batting as if he were an impostor, had replaced the original. Shots that once flew off his blade to the stands where the audiences were part excited and part fearful let him down badly. The patented pick-up shot went AWOL, the drives down the ground disappeared, the first sign of aggression often brought about his downfall. Suryakumar shrugged off those disappointments, maintaining his million-dollar smile and crooning that he was only 'out of runs, not out of form'. But the more he espoused that theory, the more one felt that he was desperately trying to convince himself, more than the outside world, that that was indeed the case.

No doubts, however, were raised about his continued presence in the larger scheme of things because he was doing all other things right. Why, he even started to win tosses, something Indian fans had lost touch with across formats and captains for a long time. He managed to separate the lack of runs from his responsibilities as skipper and leader. The string of successes meant there was no threat to his place at the helm, and rightly so because of what he had achieved in the previous couple of years and because of the knowledge that it was only a matter of time before he hit his straps.

K.R. DEEPAK

Towards the end of December, at the conclusion of a five-match series against South Africa when his lean patch manifested itself in the form of an eerily unwelcome sequence of 12, 5, 12 and 5, SKY had gone 14 months and 22 innings with a T20I half-century. The argument that especially in this format, where impact is measured by strike-rates more than tall scores, half-centuries are passe didn't cut ice because in each of those 22 outings, he batted at either No. 3 or No. 4, from where batters usually make merry and

Expect more fireworks from Suryakumar over the next month as India seek to become the first team to successfully defend the T20 World Cup

where their success is measured by both strike-rates *and* the number of runs scored.

Suryakumar used the time between the end of the South Africa series (on December 19) and the start of the New Zealand showdown (from January 21) most judiciously, assiduously working to rediscover his mojo. That entailed hours of hard labour at the nets because that is almost mandatory, whether in the runs or not, but then again, it isn't as if he had allowed the grass to grow under his feet in 2025. Around his exertions at practice, he spent plenty of time with his young family and let his hair down in the company of close friends who, luckily, are the kind that tell you what you must hear instead of what you want to hear.

Having cleared his mind - sometimes, that is the most difficult thing to do when one is constantly involved in the practice-play-travel routine - and made the mental switch that went from desperation to relaxed confidence, Suryakumar announced himself in the five matches against the Kiwis, India's last engagements before the defence of their World Cup crown, which begins in Mumbai on Saturday against United States. The earliest indications that the Suryakumar of old wasn't too far away from expressing himself came in the opener in Nagpur. Opting to bat, India lost Sanju Samson and the returning Ishan Kishan within the first 17 deliveries when the skipper strode out to join Abhishek Sharma. He watched from the best seat in the VCA Stadium, the non-striker's end, as the left-handed opener tore the Kiwis to shreds, but he wasn't just content to sail in the younger man's wake.

Without fuss, but with the authority that was once his calling card, Suryakumar eased to 32 off 22. He was overshadowed by Abhishek's 35-ball 84 and a furious cameo down the order from Rinku Singh (44 not out off 20) but those who were looking for portents would have taken note of how the trademark strokes came without effort, of how comfortable he looked in the middle, of how the impostor had made way, belatedly but thankfully, for the real deal.

As if to reiterate that one hadn't imagined things, Suryakumar produced a raging unbeaten 82 two nights later in Raipur. For a fair part of his 122-run alliance for the third wicket with Kishan, Suryakumar was content to play second fiddle as India charged towards their target of 209. Kishan, grabbing the unexpected lifeline thrown by a change in mindset of the team management, smashed 76 off just 32 deliveries to dominate the partnership after India had lost their openers with just six on the board, but Suryakumar wasn't to be left behind. At one stage, the captain was 11 off 11; he finally finished 82 not out off 37 deliveries, a smashing compilation sealed and delivered with nonchalance as the swagger and the strut of the past came rushing to the fore.

They say of champions - and that's what Suryakumar is - that all it takes for them to 'find' themselves is one knock. Despite his sustained bad trot, Suryakumar still averaged in the mid-30s and struck at more than 160 per 100 balls faced at the start of the New Zealand series, a testament to the dizzying heights he had reached previously when he was the No. 1 batter in the world in the 20-format for well-nigh on two years. Having used Nagpur to convince himself that all was well, again, in his batting world, Suryakumar slid into the consistency that not so long back made him the most feared batter in the universe. After Raipur, he unleashed an unbeaten 57 (26b) in Guwahati and rounded off the series with 63 off 30 in Thiruvananthapuram, when India amassed 271 in their allotment.

In five innings, SKY had scaled the dizzying heights (for the rest of us) that were so commonplace for him, finishing with 242 runs at an average of 80.67 and a surreal strike-rate of 196.75. He reeled off 25 fours and 14 sixes; interestingly, or is it coincidentally, the only time he didn't make a score of substance (8 in the sole loss in Visakhapatnam), he batted at No. 3 when Kishan was benched owing to an injury. As many as 234 of his series runs came at No. 4, which is perhaps where he will slot in at the World Cup, once Tilak Varma returns to the playing XI and Kishan moves up to partner Abhishek and replace the horribly misfiring Samson.

Mere formality

The Player-of-the-Series award was a mere formality. Suryakumar didn't need that honour for affirmation. He wouldn't have minded it one bit if it had gone to Kishan, who rounded off his international comeback (after more than two years) celebrations with a spectacular hundred in the final outing. It was the sixth time he was officially crowned the boss of a series, jointly with Sri Lankan Wanindu Hasaranga only behind Virat Kohli (7) for the most Player-of-the-Series awards in T20I cricket.

Timing has always been a Suryakumar forte - unlike with Kishan or Hardik Pandya or Shivam Dube, you don't associate him with muscle and brute force - but the timing of his return to run-making ways couldn't have been more opportune. Despite his outwardly infectious enthusiasm, his inability to pitch in would have rankled him more than he let on. Now that that box also has been ticked, expect more fireworks from Suryakumar - 'The SKY is blue again' - over the next month, when India seek to rewrite history and become the first team to successfully defend the T20 World Cup and the first side to go all the way on home patch.

An inspired choice to succeed Rohit as the 20-over skipper after the older Mumbaikar retired in 2024, Suryakumar has the chance to emulate the man from whom he has learnt so much about so many things. What a fascinating prospect that is.

THE GIST

- For the whole of 2025, it was as if someone answering to the name of Suryakumar Yadav, resembling him physically but batting as if he were an impostor, had replaced the original
- Despite his sustained bad trot, he still averaged in the mid-30s and struck at more than 160 per 100 balls faced at the start of the New Zealand series
- Timing has always been Suryakumar's forte, but the timing of his return to run-making ways couldn't have been more opportune as India look to successfully defend their T20 World Cup

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, ANITHA Krishnan, w/o Ranjith Ravikumar, d/o V. Unnikrishnan, born on 08–Jul–1985, having my address at 69/2953, ESRA–A059, Karukappilly Parambu, Elamakkara p. o, Ernakulam, Kerala – 682026, have changed my name to Anitha R. Krishnan vide affidavit dated 03–Feb–2026, at Bengaluru.

I, MAJELLA Diane Baptist, d/o; Joseph Alexander Baptist, r/o: No–A001, Sahasra Grand Apt, Chillikere Service Rd, Kalyananagar, Blr –560043. Have changed my name as Majella Joseph Baptist.

I, DIVYA Chandrasekaran, w/o; Raj Kumar Kujuluva Subramanian, r/o: G 10, B Block, White Breeze Apts, Nagondahalli, Whitefield, Blr – 5600663. Have changed my name as Divya Malli Chandrasekaran.

We, Gopinath K & Pramila G, r/at #62, 2nd Main, 4th Cross, near 515 Workshop, Gowthampuram, Halasuru, Bengaluru 560008 have changed our daughter name from Hadithi G to G Harini vide affidavit dtd 04.02.2026 sworn before Notary Gangaraju, B'luru

I, BANGALORE Vijayasarathi Mangala Devi , R/a No.19, 3rd Cross, Nanjarasappa Layout, Nagarabhavi, Bangalore-560072 have changed my name to Vijayasarathi Mangala Devi vide affidavit dt: 03.02.2026 sworn before Notary K.V.Mani, B'luru

I, MAMATHA Matama Reddy, R/a No.59/4, 21st A Main, 16th Cross, 1st Sector, HSR Layout, Vangalahalli, Bangalore-560102 have changed my name to Mamatha Subba Reddy vide affidavit dt: 03.02.2026 sworn before Notary K.V.Mani, B'luru

I, ASHA Prasanna, W/o Prasanna Upadhyaya U, R/at No.475, 3rd Block, 9th Main, HMT Layout, Vidyaranyapura, Bengaluru-560097 have changed my name from Asha Prasanna to Asha Prasanna Upadhyaya vide affidavit dated 29/12/2025 sworn before Notary G.R. Ravichandra Reddy, Bengaluru.

I, ATHEEQ Ahmed Pasha, R/a No.12, 9th Cross, Hosahalli Main Road, Padarayanapura, Bangalore-560026 have changed my name to Athiq Ahmed Pasha vide affidavit dt: 03.02.2026 sworn before Notary K.V.Mani, B'luru.

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Murari Lal Parashar Father of Ankit Kumar Parashar resident of Medical Training Centre Air Force , Cambridge Road, Bangalore, Karnataka-560007, hereby declare that I have changed my name from Murari Lal Parashar to Murarilal vide Affidavit dated 03 February 2026, sworn before Notary public A.R.Muneer Ahmed Bengaluru

I, Maya Parashar, Mother of Ankit Kumar Parashar, resident of Medical Training Centre Air Force, Cambridge Road, Bangalore, Karnataka – 560007, hereby declare that I have changed my name from Maya Parashar to Maya Sharma vide Affidavit dated 03 February 2026, sworn before Notary Public A. R. Muneer Ahmed, Bengaluru

I, SHREYA RAJ Rangaraju D/o Rangaraju Mysore Sheshadri R/o 68, 1st Floor, 4th Main Road, LIC Ideal Colony, Jayanagar 3rd Block, Bengaluru-560011 Karnataka have changed my name to Shreya Ranga Raj vide affidavit dated 04-02-2026 before Meer Hassan Notary Bengaluru.

I, SESHAMMA M J W/o Dayanandam Moddu Lakshmaiah residing at No.58, 3rd Cross, Bore Bank Road, Benson Town Post, Bengaluru-560046 Karnataka have changed my name to Arpana Moddu Dayanandam vide affidavit dated 05-09-2014 before K.H. Jagadish, Notary, Bengaluru.

I, SERVICE No. 14833529X, Rank: Naik (MT), Name: Kaviya Selvan.K, S/o Kabila Kumar.S, R/at No.183, ML Block, Oorgaum Post, K G F-563120, have changed my father's name from Kabila Kumar to Kabila Kumar.S and Correct Date of Birth is 09-03-1956 instead of 01-07-1960 vide affidavit dated 04-02-2026 sworn before Notary Thangaraj.S, K G F.

PUBLIC NOTICE

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PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that my client Mr. Varun R Aaron S/o. Mr. Paul Aaron, is the absolute owner of the Schedule property and Sale Deed dated 02/05/2017 bearing No. SHV-1-00596-2017-18, C.D No.SHVD248 and registered at the office of the Sub Registrar, Shivaji Nagar, Bangalore is lost while shifting the house and my client had filed a complaint in respect of this to Bengaluru City police Unit (Pulakeshinagar PS) immediately after coming to his knowledge.

Any person/s having found the same may kindly be returned to the undersigned or to the jurisdictional police or undersigned within 14 days from the date of this publication and if any person misusing the original one shall be prosecuted and if anyone entering into any transaction without my client's knowledge with any third party our client shall not be responsible for the same.

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All that piece and parcel of the residential Apartment bearing No. 102 on First Floor of the project known as "TRANQUILLE" measuring 2995 Sq. Feet of Super built up area inclusive of proportionate share in the Common areas such as passages, lobbies, staircases and other areas of common use along with Two Covered Car Park Space in the basement, together with 1347.61 Sq. Feet of Undivided share, right, title and interest in property presently bearing Municipal No. 154, (Portion of Old No. 1, 1A) PID No. 91-95-154, measuring in all 22,369.44 Sq. Feet situated at Wheeler Road, BBMP Ward No. 91, Bangalore and bounded as follows:

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Sd/- KISHORE KUMAR L
Advocate & Legal Consultant
#56/1, 7th Main, Railway Parallel Road, Near Ayyappa Temple, Srirampura, Bangalore-560021.
Ph. 9880008261/ 9611834757

PUBLIC NOTICE

State Environment Impact Assessment Authority, Karnataka, (Constituted by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India), have accorded Environmental Clearance for the construction of Residential and Commercial Development Sy. No. 20 (P), 21/1A, 21/1B, 21/2, 21/3, 21/4, 22/2, 26, 27, 31/1, 31/2, 31/3, 31/4, 32, 33/1, 33/2, 33/3, 34, 35/1, 35/2, 35/3, 36/1, 36/2, 50, 51/1, 51/2, 52/1, 54/1, 54/2, 54/3, 55/2, 55/3, 55/4, 55/5, 55/6, 55/7, 55/9, 55/10, 55/11, 56/2 (P), 56/3 (P), 56/4 (P), 56/5 (P), 56/6 (P), 56/7 (P), 57/1 (P), 57/2, 57/3A (P), 57/3B (P), 57/3C, 57/4, 57/5, 57/6 (P), 58, 59/1, 59/2, 59/3, 60/1, 60/2, 60/3, 60/4, 60/5, 60/6, 60/7, 61/1, 61/2, 61/3, 62/1, 62/2, 62/3, 62/4, 62/5, 63/1, 63/2, 64/1 (P), 65/1, 65/2 (P), 65/3 (P), 65/4 (P), 66/1, 66/2, 66/3, 66/4, 67 (P), 68/1 (P), 69/1 (P), 171/1A (P), 173/1 (P), 173/2 (P), 174/1 (P), 174/2 (P), 174/3 (P), 174/4, 174/5 (P), 174/6 (P), 174/7 (P), 174/8, 175/1, 176/1, 177/1 (P), 177/2 (P), 177/3, 187/1 situated at Amanidoddakere Village, Kasaba Hobli, Hoskote Taluk, Bangalore Rural District vide EC Identification No. EC25B3813KA5874774N and File No. SEIAA240 CON 2025 Dated: 30th January 2026.

The copies of clearance letters/ details are available with Karnataka State Environment Impact Assessment Authority at **http://environmentclearance.nic.in**

M/s. SOBHA LIMITED
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GOVERNMENT OF PUDUCHERRY
DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND ANIMAL WELFARE

Puducherry, Date: 05/2/2026

e -TENDER NOTICE

'e-Tenders' are invited on behalf of the President of India by the Chairman, Committee for centralized purchase of medicines and Equipments of this department for the purchase of medicines, vaccines and equipments for the year 2025-2026.The Bidders should submit their tender **online only** at the Government website **https://pudutenders.gov.in/.**

The Tender details, and 'Terms and Conditions' are also available in the websites **https://www.py.gov.in/** and **https://ahd.py.gov.in/** for reference only.

(DR.G.LATHA MANGESHKKAR)
DIRECTOR

No.788/DIP/AD(Press)/2025-26

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE, BALLARI RANGE, BALLARI
SP Office Compound, Near Durgamma Temple, Ballari.
Ph: 08392-254400 E-Mail : patoigpblr@ksp.gov.in

No.18/STS/Drone/IGP/BR/2025-26 Dated: 03.02.2026

TENDERANNOUNCEMENT

Tender for the supply and Mainttenance of Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (Drone) to Inspector General of Police, Ballari Range, Ballari with a grant of Rs. 100 Lakhs has been invited through e-procurement in two envelope system from eligible suppliers on 03.02.2026 Vide Tender No. KSP/2025-26/IND0534. The last date for submission of tender is 17.02.2026. More details can be found on the website www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in

Sd/- Inspector General of Police
Ballari Range, Ballari.

DIPR/Ballari/963/KSMCA/2025-26

Office of the Assistant Conservator of Forests, Khanapur Suv Division, Khanapur.

No. ACF/KNP/CAMPA/Tender/2025-26. Dated : 03-02-2026.

Tender Notification

Invitation of Tender for Construction of Residential Buildinf for frontline Staff at Londa Range during the year 2025-26.

It is hereby notified calling attention of the desirous tenderers/bidders, that Indent No. KFD/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT30176 has been published for Construction of Residential Building for frontline Staff to be carried out at Londa Range during the year 2025-26. Dated on18-02-2026. Intended tenderes/ bidders may contact office of undersigned on working days for further details.

Sd/-Tender Inviting Authority
Assistanat Conservaotr of Forests
Khanapur Sub Division.Khanapur

DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-1761/KSMCA/2025-26

ನಗರಸಭಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಮದ್ದೂರು,
ಮಂಡ್ಯ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ–571428 ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್:www.maddurtown.gov.in
ಸಹಾಯವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ :08232-232105
ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ನಸಮ/ಪ.ಅ/ಟೆಂಡರ್–28/2025–26 ದಿ:02.02.2026

ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಮದ್ದೂರು ನಗರಸಭೆ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯ ಹೋತಗೆರೆಯಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಘನತ್ಯಾಜ್ಯ ವಸ್ತು ನಿರ್ವಹಣಾ ಘಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಲು ಆಸಕ್ತಯುಳ್ಳ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಗೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಿದೆ.

ಕ್ರ ಸಂ : 01. ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ ಹೆಸರು : BIO-REMEDIATION / BIO-MINING OF LEGACY WASTE AT HOOTHAGERE LAND FILL SITE OF TMC MADDUR AS PER CENTRAL POLLUTION BOARD GUIDELINES and SWM rules 2016. (DMA/2025-26/SE7184) **.ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ (ಲಕ್ಷಗಳಲ್ಲಿ) :** 147.48. **ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ ಮೊತ್ತ :** ರೂ.2,95,000/–. **ಅನುದಾನದ ವಿವರ :** ಸ್ವಚ್ಚಭಾರತ 2.0/ಎನ್.ಜಿ.ಟಿ./ಇತರೆ ನಗರಸಭಾ ಅನುದಾನ. ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 09–02–2025 ರ ಸಂಜೆ 5.30 ಗಂಟೆಯೊಳಗೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 11–02–2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ರಂದು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ನಲ್ಲಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಕಛೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಆರೋಗ್ಯ ಶಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/–ಪೌರಾಯುಕ್ತರು, ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಮದ್ದೂರು

ಪಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಹಿಸನಿ–ಮಂ/ಕೆಎಸ್‌ಎಂಸಿ&ಎ/754/2025–26

Government of Karnataka
Department Of Archaeology, Museums And Heritage, Mysore
Karnataka Exhibition Authority Premises, Mysuru-570010,
Tel : 0821-2424673/74, Fax No.0821-2424665,
Email- commr_amh@yahoo.in, Web : https://archaeology.karnataka.gov.in, https://nammakarnataka.in

Tender Notification Number: DAMH/CW/S.T.T-29/2025-26 Date: 02.02.2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

On behalf of the Governor, Government of Karnataka, the department of Archaeology, Museum and Heritage, Mysuru has invited the itemwise tender for the works of DAMH/2025-26:OW/WORK_INDENT-152,163 to166, 180 to 202 & 205 under the standard tender documents KW-3&4. The amount of minimum Rs.95.99lakhs to Maximum Rs.503.32 lakhs kept for these tenders as per Standard Tender bid Document. Tender documents can be obtained through **(https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/)** e-portal from date **03.02.2026** onwards.

Last date and time of any Queries for tender	09.02.2026, 17.00 hrs
Pre bid meeting of tender submission	07.02.2026,11.00 hrs
Last date and time of tender submission	10.02.2026, 17.00 hrs
Opening of Date and Time of Technical bid	12.02.2026, 16.30 hrs
Opening of Date and Time of Financial bid	13.02.2026, 16.00 hrs

Sd/- Commissioner
Department of Archaeology, Museums And Heritage, Mysore

DIPR/MYSORE/SHIRDISAI/1607/2025-26

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, DAVANAGERE DIVISION, DAVANAGERE.

No.EE:PWD:Dvg/AE-2:IFT-39:2025-26 Dated:- 04.02.2026

SHOR TERM E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

Ref : This office tender notification No. IFT-39/2025-26 dated : 04.02.2026

The works under Head of Account 4059~80~051~0~60~132 CMIDP, 4 works with minimum amount Rs. 150.000 lakhs and maximum amount Rs. 350.00 lakhs and Head of Account 5054-03-337-0-17-154-SH Improvements 1 work amount Rs. 500.00 lakhs pertaining to Harihara, Davangere sub divisions under the Jurisdiction of PWD, Davanagere division has been called for the tenders (Indent nos 31609,31611,31610,32605 and 32214) from registered Contractors in KPWD for the above works through KPP Portal as per standard tender documents rules.

Tender dates are as mentioned below:

Details of dates	Sl no. 1 & 5 Works	Sl no 2,3 & 4 Works
Last Date & time for tender queries	Date : 05.02.2026 Timing 4.00 P.M.	Date : 05.02.2026 Timing 4.00 P.M.
Prebid meeting held: office of Executive enginner, PWD divin, Davanagere.	Date : 07.02.2026 Timing 11.30 A.M.	Date : 07.02.2026 Timing 11.30 A.M.
Last Date & time for receipt of tenders	Date : 19.02.2026 Timing 4.00 P.M.	Date : 12.02.2026 Timing 4.00 P.M.
Date & time for opening of Technical Bid :	Date : 20.02.2026 Timing 4.30 P.M.	Date : 13.02.2026 Timing 4.30 P.M.

Further details can be obtained from this office in office hours.

DIPR/CTA/KSMCA/ 710/2025-26

Sd/- Executive Engineer
PWD, Davanagere.

ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ – ಧಾರವಾಡ ನಗರಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರ
ನವನಗರ, ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ – 580 025.
ದೂರವಾಣಿ : 0836–2224098, 2224195, 2224301, 222616.

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : ಹು.ಧಾ.ನ.ಪ್ರಾ./ಅ.ವಿ./ಟೆ.ನೋ. ನಂ. 21/2025–26/5472
ದಿನಾಂಕ : 03–02–2026

ಮರು ಇ-ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕತೆ ಆದ್ಯಾದೇಶ 1999 – 2000 ರ ನಿಯಮದಂತೆ ಸ್ಟ್ಯಾಂಡರ್ಡ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಬಿಡ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯುಮೆಂಟ್ ಕೆ.ಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂ – 4 ರನ್ವಯ **a) INDENT No. : 56/CALL-2, b) INDENT No. : 57/CALL-2** ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ ಲೈಸನ್ಸ್ ಹೊಂದಿದ ಅರ್ಹ ಸಿವಿಲ್ / ವಿದ್ಯುತ್ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ. **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಕೆಳಗೆ ನಿಗದಿಪಡಿಸಿರುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಹಾಗೂ ಸಮಯದೊಳಗಾಗಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಬಹುದು.

1) ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳನ್ನು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರಕಾರದ ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ. ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಡಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ, 2) ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 07–03–2026 ರ ಸಂಜೆ 4.00 ಘಂಟೆ, 3) ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 09–03–2026 ರ ಸಂಜೆ 4.00 ಘಂಟೆ, 4) ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 12–03–2026 ರ ಸಂಜೆ 4.00 ಘಂಟೆಗೆ, ಆಗದಿದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಗೊತ್ತುಪಡಿಸಿದ ದಿನಾಂಕದಂದು ತೆರೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು, ಎಲ್ಲ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಹಾಗೂ ನಿಯಮಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾದರಿ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ದಾಖಲೆ ಕೆ.ಡಬ್ಲ್ಯೂ – 4 ದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿವರಿಸಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ ನಿಯಮಾವಳಿಗಳನ್ನು ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿ ಅಭ್ಯಸಿಸಿ ಅರ್ಥೈಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಸೂಚಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಇಚ್ಚಿಸಿದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರದ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ವಿಭಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಕಛೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು ಹಾಗೂ ಏನಾದರೂ ತಿದ್ದುಪಡಿ / ಸೇರ್ಪಡೆ ಇದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆಪಿಪಿಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲನಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಸಹಿ/– ಆಯುಕ್ತರು,
ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ – ಧಾರವಾಡ ನಗರಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರ,
ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ

ಡಿಐಪಿಆರ್/ಧಾರವಾಡ/1188/ಮಿಸೆಲ್/2025–26

F BG-BGE

BIFFes 2026: Fans thrilled as Kaikini shares wisdom with a touch of humour

At the 17th Bengaluru International Film Festival, writer Jayant Kaikini opened up about the quirky challenges of writing love songs and what it really means to tell a story on screen

Vivek M.V.
BENGALURU

Poet Jayanth Kaikini addressing attendees at the Bengaluru International Film Festival in Bengaluru on Wednesday.
SUDHAKARA JAIN

Whistles and claps filled the auditorium at Lulu Mall in Bengaluru as Kannada writer and lyricist Jayant Kaikini reflected on cinema. Kaikini is no less than a superstar of Kannada cinema, and the rapturous response during the session at the 17th Bengaluru International Film Festival was proof.

Kaikini's thoughts on writing songs and screenwriting were marked by great wit. "Imagine writing your first love song at 52!" he said about penning the superhit song *Anisuthide Yaako Indu* from *Mungaru Male* (2006), the film that spurred Kaikini's glorious journey of writing evergreen lyrics for Kannada films.

Talking to writer, director, and editor Prasanth Pandit, Kaikini spoke about the practical pressures of writing romantic numbers.

He said, "Around 70% of the songs in cinema are about love. What other option of words do you have besides *olavu, nalivu, hasiru, and usiru?* Every time, you have to think of a new expression to talk of love."

Personal touch

Speaking on films, Kaikini said the more personal the stories, the bigger the impact they have on the audience. Even the great Kurosawa (Akira) made films from his experiences, he said. Kaikini, author of several collections of short stories and poems in Kannada, said songwriting didn't necessarily need workshops. "You find a voice of your own by voracious reading and practice. If you go to a school, the results will appear like identical-fit men from a gym or a bunch of women with the same bridal makeup."

On films adapted from novels and short stories, Kaikini felt it is unfair to expect a perfect translation on the big screen. "Cinema is a different medium. When you read a book, you visualise a film based on the story. So your expectations are different right from the start."

Reverse osmosis

Kaikini revealed that in his case, reverse osmosis occurred after his success as a lyricist and film writer. "Several of my works were republished after the success of *Mungaru Male*," he said, explaining how writing shouldn't be mistaken for only dialogues in a movie. "Silent movies of Charlie Chaplin had extensive literature. Satyajit Ray would draw every shot of his movie."

The Sahitya Academy Award winner pointed out that it is natural to get nostalgic about yesteryear classics, but opined that the cinema of today has its own value. "Never underestimate or look down upon modern art. Today's pop is tomorrow's folk," he noted.

'Mere paas cinema hai'

Kaikini mentioned that films were a part of his life from a young age. "If somebody asks me what I have in life, I will say *mere paas cinema hai,*" a spin on Amitabh Bachchan's iconic dialogue from *Deewar* (1975), establishing the writer's love for the art form.

The Bangalore Club security staff accused of assaulting man

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Cubbon Park police on Tuesday registered an FIR against security guards of The Bangalore Club for allegedly assaulting a 55-year-old man on Monday afternoon after a dispute over entry into the club to retrieve his lost mobile phone. According to the police, the victim, Rajesh Ananth, visited the club with his family on Sunday and allegedly forgot his phone there. He claimed that a guard assaulted him with a cane. The police said the man, who was under the influence of alcohol, removed his clothes in protest.

Karnataka to roll out automated land mutation system Statewide

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a major administrative change aimed at reducing delays and reducing the scope for official discretion in land records, the Karnataka Revenue Department has begun rolling out an automated mutation system across the State. The reform is intended to speed up the updating of property details in the Record of Rights by reducing manual intervention.

In a note addressed to all Deputy Commissioners, Meena Nagaraj, Revenue Commissioner, clarified that mutations will be cleared automatically only if no objections are raised within the stipulated notice period.

Currently, mutations linked to registrable documents such as sale deeds and gift deeds require a seven-day notice, while non-registrable cases follow a 15-day notice window.

Under the new automated system, the physical approval or thumb impression of the revenue inspector will no longer be mandatory. For registrable transactions, the system will grant approval automatically on the night of the eighth day, while non-registrable mutations will be approved on the sixteenth night. As a result, routine approvals by revenue inspectors will be eliminated, though officials will still have the option to raise objections within the notice period.

The auto-mutation mechanism is presently being piloted in the Mandya and Maddur taluks. Based on the pilot's outcome, the department plans to extend the system across Karnataka.

Father-son habitual offenders from Bihar arrested

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a coordinated effort, a special team from the Bihar police, with the help of the jurisdictional Kodigehalli police, arrested two habitual offenders who carried cash rewards on their heads. They had been running an extortion business from Bengaluru, the police said.

The arrested accused have been identified as Manik Singh, 30, and his father Manoj Singh, 65, both infamous gangsters who had been absconding for the past five years by dodging the Bihar police. The duo was finally arrested by the Bihar Special Task Force (STF).

40 cases against duo

According to the police, the father-son duo is accused in more than 40 serious criminal cases, including over 24 murder cases.

Complaints against them had been registered across multiple States, including Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal. The Bihar police had also announced a reward of ₹3 lakh for information leading to their arrest.

Extortion calls

Investigations revealed that Manik had been hiding in Bengaluru for the last five years. For the past two years, he had been staying with his father in the Kodigehalli police station limits. During their stay, the accused allegedly made extortion calls to builders and businessmen in Bihar, demanding money.

After trailing the duo for several years, the Bihar STF finally traced their location to Bengaluru and arrested them. Further investigation is under way to ascertain their local contacts and criminal activities in the city, the police said.

Governor orders probe into charges of corruption in KSOU

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Corruption charges against the former Registrar (admin) of Karnataka State Open University had led to a protest by the university's employees in March 2025. FILE PHOTO

Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot has appointed a one-man fact-finding committee headed by retired Karnataka High Court judge B.A. Patil to probe the charges of corruption in the Karnataka State Open University (KSOU).

The probe order by the Governor, who is also Chancellor of universities, follows the allegations of bribery and corruption against the former Registrar (admin) of KSOU. This had led to a protest by the university's employees in March last year.

As per a notification issued by the Governor's Secretariat on dated January 30, 2026, the committee has been directed to probe the appointment of temporary teaching and non-teaching staff for more than the sanctioned posts, besides the change in designations.

Other issues to probe include opening of unnecessary regional centres and appointment of temporary directors for the regional centres, apart from the creation of posts without the approval of the State government and the Board of Management. Permissions given to open private study centres and a deposit of ₹1.71 lakh to the Virtual Education Trust, New Delhi, will also be probed.

The one-man fact-finding committee has been asked to inquire into the aforementioned issues listed and any other issues related to or arising during the course of inquiry and submit the report within one month.

It may be mentioned here that the allegations of corruption and the protest in March 2025, which appeared in the media, were discussed in the Legislative Assembly. The Additional Chief Secretary to the State government's Department of Education (Higher Education) had directed Karnataka State Higher Education Council (KSHEC) vice-chairperson S.R. Niranjana to inquire into the allegations by visiting the university in person to collect the material evidence.

The report of the preliminary inspection conducted by the vice-chairperson to ascertain facts observed "serious lapses".

Based on the recommendation of the report, the State government had sought the approval from the Governor to constitute an inquiry committee headed by a retired High Court judge to conduct a probe under Section 8 of the KSOU Act 1992.

The Governor has also directed the registrar of KSOU to provide secretarial assistance, office, transport and accommodation for the fact-finding committee.

Could the near-extinct Asiatic cheetah rewild Saudi Arabia?

Mummified cheetahs unearthed in Saudi Arabia give scientists an opportunity to understand the evolutionary history of the cats; the researchers concluded that cheetahs to 'rewild' the kingdom can be sourced from the closest subspecies of those they found, paving the way for their 'return'

Divya Gandhi
BENGALURU

Cats from the past: Scientists discovered seven naturally mummified cheetahs and skeletal remains of 54 in Saudi Arabia's caves. Here, a researcher examines one of the mummified cheetahs in a lab. AP

The cheetah is a spotted beast that can burn through savannas like a bolt of lightning to hunt prey vastly bigger than itself. This big cat is the world's fastest terrestrial mammal, which purrs more than it growls and has been historically tamed and trained by people to hunt game.

Cheetahs once roamed most of Africa and western and southern Asia, from the Arabian Peninsula to India. Today, they have vanished from 91% of its historical global range. In India, it was declared extinct in 1952 from hunting and habitat loss, and over a century ago, it vanished from Saudi Arabia.

Asiatic cheetahs (*Acinonyx jubatus venaticus)*, unlike those in Africa, which that tenuously hold on, are the most critically endangered: just around 50 individual Asiatic cheetahs remain in the wild, a small population in Iran.

Amidst this dire scenario came a "serendipitous discovery" recently in the caves of Saudi Arabia of the "long-term presence" of cheetahs. Scientists discovered seven naturally mummified animals and skeletal remains of 54, reported in the latest edition of *Nature Communications Earth and Environment*.

The remains, unearthed from the Lauga cave network in the Arar area of northern Saudi Arabia, dated back to 4,223 years ago and some to just over a century ago, giving scientists a valuable opportunity to understand the evolutionary history of cheetahs in their former range. They concluded that "rewilding" of cheetahs in Saudi Arabia can be sourced from the closest subspecies of the discovered cheetahs", potentially paving the way for their 'return'.

Treasures from caves

Genomic data of these specimens showed the presence of two subspecies, the Asiatic cheetah (*A. j. venaticus*) and the north-western African cheetah (*A. j. hecki*), neither of which occur in the Arabian Peninsula any more. The many caves in the region could have been used as denning sites for the creatures. The study used palaeo-chronological dating to establish the time period, genomic sequencing to identify subspecies, and radiographic analysis to determine age.

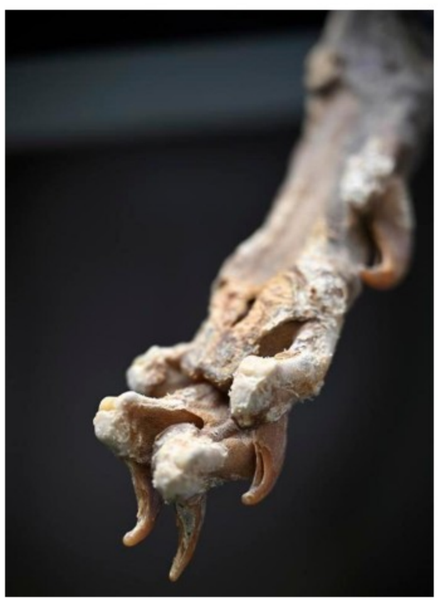
Although records indisputably suggest the historical presence of the species in the areas designated Saudi Arabia, Oman, Yemen, Kuwait, Iraq, Jordan, and Palestine today, some point to the scarcity of evidence to adequately represent the true historical distribution of the cheetah. While the primary reasons for the Arabian Peninsula's vanishing cheetah are poorly documented, they are thought to be habitat loss and fragmentation, prey depletion, human-wildlife conflict, unregulated hunting, and trade in cheetah as pets or game hunting, said the research paper.

Over the past 50 years, Saudi Arabia has significantly changed wildlife management policy and one of its biodiversity goals includes the re-establishment of animals to their former biogeographic ranges.

The kingdom has already successfully restored ungulates to landscapes where they had disappeared or dwindled, e.g. Arabian oryx, Arabian gazelles, and the Nubian ibex. As ungulate populations recover here, "it is timely for the reestablishment of extirpated apex carnivores – among them cheetah," said the paper. DNA studies showed that the prehistoric Saudi Arabia cheetahs are genomically closest to the west African subspecies *A. j. hecki*.

The results also highlight the important role that caves play "as repositories of ancient biodiversity informing." Natural mummies can remain well preserved for thousands of years, especially in arid soil caves where desiccation was made possible by dry microclimates where bacterial action is diminished.

Africa's cheetahs are in peril too: 90% of the animals live outside protected areas and on private farmlands, and conflict with people is not infrequent: the cats prey on livestock quite visibly during the day, and farmers, to save their animals, often trap or shoot cheetahs, per the paper. Larger carnivores such as lions, leopards, and hyena also kill cheetahs when competing for prey or territory. As a result, in Saharan Africa, the spotted cats are as few as 0.0002/km.



This undated image provided by Communications Earth and Environment shows the claws of a mummified cheetah. AP

Cheetahs once roamed most of Africa and western and southern Asia, from the Arabian Peninsula to India. Today, they have vanished from 91% of its historical global range, with Asiatic cheetahs unlike those in Africa, which that tenuously hold on, being the most critically endangered

An adequate habitat?

Ravi Chellam, wildlife biologist and CEO, Metastring Foundation, Bengaluru, has been tracking Project Cheetah in India, as part of which several African cheetahs have been introduced to Madhya Pradesh. *The Hindu* asked him about the prudence of reintroducing cheetahs to Saudi Arabia: "This is a sovereign decision for each country to take. Having said that, from an ecological perspective it is important to ensure that adequate good quality habitats are available before sourcing the cheetahs for the reintroduction effort," he said.

Based on the evidence, at least 1 lakh sq. km. of habitat is required to establish a viable and self-sustaining population of cheetahs in the semi-desert and desert landscapes of Saudi Arabia. The chosen habitats should support a reasonable density and diversity of prey species and be relatively free of human activities especially road traffic, he added.

As for whether Asian cheetahs should have been introduced to India, Dr. Chellam said that with the highly endangered status of Asiatic cheetahs in Iran, "it is not advisable to remove any cheetahs from this very small population."

For the same reason, cheetahs reintroduced to Saudi Arabia would have to be the northwest African sub-species, *A. j. hecki*. But even this subspecies is endangered in the wild in western and northern Africa. So "the only realistic options are to source the required cheetahs from either *A. j. raineyi* (east Africa) or *A. j. jubatus* (southern Africa)," Dr. Chellam said.

There is little clarity about the funding for India's Project Cheetah but, he added, "it will be one of the most expensive projects" in India's conservation history.

Liz Kierepka, a molecular ecologist who wasn't involved in the Saudi Arabia study, told *ScienceNews* that the discovery is "quite the rarity," outside of permafrost areas where several natural mummies of megafauna from the Ice Age exist. She also said relocating cheetahs from already tiny populations has the potential to cause "new problems for the donor pools.".

It requires more data, but Dr. Kierepka said she is curious what shows up in genetic analyses to help select donor cheetahs: "If they really want to pursue rewilding," she said, that could make reintroduction more likely to succeed.

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A full moon is seen shining over NASA's SLS and Orion spacecraft, atop the mobile launcher at the Kennedy Space Centre on February 1. AP

Launch of NASA's mission to moon put off till March

Agence France-Presse

NASA said on Tuesday that it will be delaying until March the launch of its first crewed flyby mission to the moon in more than half a century after encountering leaks during final tests.

The mishaps during a run-through that the U.S. space agency calls a "wet dress rehearsal" dashed hopes that the mission around the moon could launch as soon as February 8. The next possible launch window now opens on March 6.

The two-day test included filling the Space Launch System rocket with propellants, liquid hydrogen, and liquid oxygen.

Teams were initially able to work through some of the hydrogen leaks they encountered, but ultimately the leak worsened as the simulated countdown reached about T-5 minutes, NASA Administrator Jared Isaacman said in a statement.

Operations were stopped, Isaacman said, adding that "we will only launch when we believe we are as ready to undertake this historic mission."

The Artemis programme at large aims to return humans to the moon to establish a sustainable presence and later prepare for future Martian exploration

Hydrogen is particularly energetic and difficult to contain because of its low density, NASA officials said at a briefing on Tuesday.

Along with leakages, teams had to troubleshoot a valve issue related to hatch pressurisation, in addition to dropouts of audio communications, NASA said.

The latest leaks mirror issues that delayed for months the Artemis 1 launch, which was an uncrewed test mission that ultimately circled the moon in 2022.

John Honeycutt, head of the Artemis 2 Mission Management Team, said scientists had been "aggressive" in their testing to understand the Artemis 1 leaks.

But "on the ground, we're pretty limited as to how much realism we can put into the test. We try to test like we fly, but this interface is a very complex interface. This one caught us off guard," he continued.

"To me, the big takeaway was we got a chance for the rocket to talk to us, and it did just that," Honeycutt said.

Mission managers said they are analysing the data collected and making necessary repairs ahead of plans to run another dress rehearsal. For now, officials said those fixes can be performed at the Florida launchpad.

The eventual Artemis 2 moonshot will send a team of four astronauts on a flyby of the earth's satellite. That approximately 10-day mission will lay the groundwork for NASA's next planned Artemis phase, when a crewed mission is intended to actually land on the moon.

U.S. President Donald Trump has made evident that he wants to send astronauts back to the moon as soon as possible, in order to "assert American leadership in space."

The Artemis 2 astronauts had been in quarantine in Houston but were released following the delay.

The Artemis programme at large aims to return humans to the moon to establish a sustainable presence and later prepare for future Martian exploration.

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

When setting the time is not easy: a quiz on time zones around the world

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1
While most of the world's time zones are offset by one-hour increments, some have a 30-minute offset. The IST is the most famous, with its time's meridian passing exactly through a fort in _____ in Uttar Pradesh. Fill in the blank.

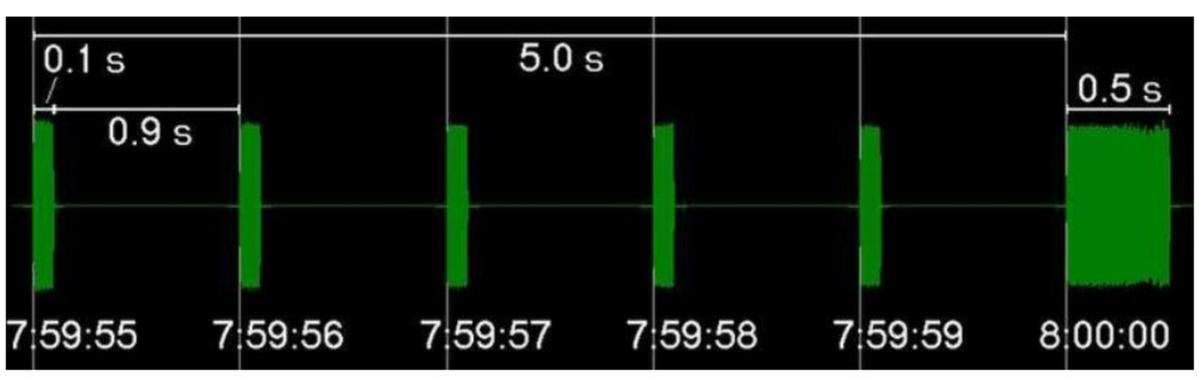
QUESTION 2
There are only two places with a 45-minute offset. One is Nepal, which maintains a time zone of UTC+5:45. Name the other place, which is a territory of New Zealand that maintains its time zone for a population of just around 600 people.

QUESTION 3
_____ holds the world record for the country with the most time zones -- 12. This is because, even though its mainland is relatively small as countries go, it has overseas territories in at least three oceans.

QUESTION 4
The Republic of X once straddled the International Date Line, so its eastern and western islands were on different days. In 1995, X moved the date line thousands of kilometres east so the whole country could be on the same day. This created UTC+14, the earliest time zone on the earth. Name X.

QUESTION 5
Technically speaking, Y has been in the 'wrong' time zone for over 80 years. While the country aligns with the U.K. and Portugal, in 1940 its leader changed it to Central European Time (UTC+1) to align with Nazi Germany, and it never changed back. Name Y.

Visual: This is a graph of the Greenwich Time Signal, which many BBC radio stations broadcast to signal the start of an hour. What's the colloquial name for the signal?



Please send in your answers to science@thehindu.co.in

Answers to January 29 quiz:
1. False claim – **Ans: Voyager 1 launched after, not before, Voyager 2**
2. No. of years in which solar system's outer planets align – **Ans: 175**
3. Voyager 2 is only human object to have flown past these bodies – **Ans: Uranus, Neptune**
4. Instrument that measured properties of interstellar plasma – **Ans: Plasma Science**
5. Name of phonograph onboard Voyager 2 – **Ans: 'The Sounds of Earth'** | Visual: **Triton**

First contact: Tamal Biswas | K.N. Viswanathan | Anmol Agrawal

For feedback and suggestions
for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

Metro fares to rise by 5% from Feb. 9

Many passengers argue that another hike, barely a year later, is unreasonable, particularly at a time when public transport is being promoted as a sustainable alternative to private vehicles

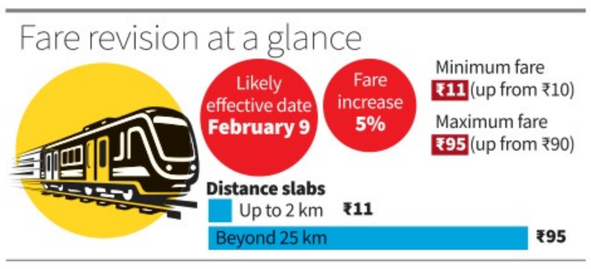
The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Officials say that the FFC's recommendations, submitted last year, are mandatory and must be enforced annually until a new committee is constituted. FILE PHOTO

The Namma Metro commuters are set to face an increase in travel costs, with fares scheduled to rise by 5% from February 9. The revision will push the minimum ticket price to ₹11 and the maximum fare to ₹95, even as commuters remain unhappy about last year's hike.

The decision follows the implementation of the annual fare adjustment recommended by the Fare Fixation Committee (FFC). The board of Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd. (BMRCL) has approved the revision, which will come into effect without requiring clearance from either the Union or the State government, according to officials.

Officials said that the FFC's recommendations, submitted last year, are mandatory and must be enforced annually until a new committee is constituted. "The fare revision is part of an automatic formula prescribed by the Fare Fixation Committee. These recommendations are binding on the operator and do not require further approvals. The BMRCL is obligated to implement them as notified," a senior BMRCL official told *The Hindu*, adding that the rounding-off of fares would be done to the nearest rupee where the increase exceeds 50 paise.



Most expensive

Currently, Bengaluru metro charges a minimum fare of ₹10 for journeys up to 2 km and a maximum of ₹90 for trips beyond 25 km. With the 5% increment, these rates are expected to rise to ₹11 and ₹95 respectively, reinforcing Bengaluru's position as the most expensive metro system in the country.

The announcement has once again drawn attention to last year's fare hike. On February 9, 2025, BMRCL had sharply increased ticket prices, with some slabs witnessing hikes exceeding 100%. The move triggered widespread protests from commuters. Following the backlash, the metro operator attributed the anomaly to technical issues and later capped the increase at 71% from February 14.

> The fare revision is part of an automatic formula prescribed by the Fare Fixation Committee. These recommendations are binding on the operator and do not require further approvals.
> A senior BMRCL official

Commuter criticism

Many passengers argue that another hike, barely a year later, is unreasonable, particularly at a time when public transport is being promoted as a sustainable alternative to private vehicles. Commuters point out that rising metro fares could undermine efforts to reduce congestion in the city, which was recently ranked as the second-most congested in the world in a TomTom report.

Prakash Mandoth, president of the Bangalore Metro and Suburban Rail Passenger's Association, criticised the timing of the revision. "The sharp fare hike implemented a year ago already placed a heavy burden on commuters. Since then, the Yellow Line has become operational, leading to a significant rise in ridership and revenue. This year's increase could have been deferred," he said.

Mr. Mandoth warned that frequent fare hikes would discourage people from using public transport. "Repeated increases will push commuters towards personal two-wheelers and cars, which many find more affordable and convenient. This move will disproportionately impact students, salaried employees, and lower- and middle-income groups. Proceeding with the hike reflects a lack of sensitivity towards everyday commuters," he added.

Cave-in near Attibele disrupts traffic on Bengaluru–Hosur Road

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Officials say the affected stretch is being excavated and refilled to stabilise the soil and prevent further slippage. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Traffic on the Bengaluru-Hosur Road was disrupted on Wednesday after a portion of National Highway 44 caved in near Attibele.

According to officials of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), the incident occurred during deep excavation work for a vehicular underpass, when an extended section of the carriageway gave way.

The affected stretch is being excavated and refilled to stabilise the soil and prevent further slippage.

"Two vehicular underpasses are currently under construction to eliminate accident-prone black spots, out of the three planned for the stretch, with retaining wall works nearing completion. Once the project is completed, the national highway will run at a lower level, while local traffic will continue to move at grade," NHAI officials said.

GBA to host Open House to highlight citizen-identified public space projects

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) will hold a two-day Open House to highlight citizen-identified public space projects and encourage their adoption and funding by the city's five corporations and external partners. The Open House, scheduled for February 6 and 7 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m at the Town Hall, is part of the city-level initiative *"Bayasidante Bayalu"*, launched in May 2025.

The initiative aims to change city's roads and streets as inclusive, citizen-centric public spaces. As part of this, citizens were invited to nominate neglected or underused public spaces in their neighbourhoods for improvement. Officials said the response was substantial, with over 250 nominations received from across the city. After preliminary checks, 194 locations were identified as feasible and added to a city-level public repository.

According to data shared by the GBA, the Central City Corporation accounts for 43 identified locations, followed by the South City Corporation with 50 sites, the North City Corporation with 49, the West City Corporation with 31, and the East City Corporation with 21.

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Percentage of death sentences upheld by the Supreme Court

8.31 in per cent. A study revealed that the court did not confirm any death sentences in recent years. The trial courts across India awarded 1,310 death sentences between 2016 and 2025. High courts considered 842 of these sentences, but upheld only 70. PTI

Decline in Russian oil imports in Jan./Dec. amid trade talks

9 in per cent. On Monday, U.S. President Donald Trump announced a trade deal with India to cut tariffs to 18% from 50% in exchange for New Delhi halting Russian oil purchases and lowering trade barriers. In January, India imported 1.215 million barrels per day (bpd) of Russian crude. PTI

Number of Himalayan peaks opened up for mountaineering

83 For the 83 notified peaks, Indian mountaineers will no longer have to pay any expedition fees. Previously, these fees were charged by the Indian Mountaineering Foundation (IMF) and the Forest Department; now the State government will bear these costs. ANI

People killed after separatist attacks in Pakistan

250 More than 250 people have been killed in coordinated attacks launched by separatists across Pakistan's Balochistan province since Saturday, a security official said on Wednesday, with fighting continuing as government forces pursue the militants. AFP

Amount saved from cyber criminals between 2021-25

8,189 in ₹ crore. The government has saved ₹8,189 crore from getting stolen by cyber criminals in more than 23.61 lakh cases reported during the last four years, Rajya Sabha was informed Wednesday. PTI

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Issues surrounding UGC regulations

What prompted the Supreme Court to halt the UGC's revised equity framework? Why has the definition of caste-based discrimination triggered opposition from unreserved categories? Why does the court believe certain provisions may be open to misuse?

EXPLAINER

Rangarajan R.

The story so far:
The Supreme Court has stayed the University Grants Commission (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2026 (UGC regulations, 2026), holding that they are ambiguous and can be misused. The court has issued notice to the Centre and has held that the UGC's 2012 regulations on the subject will continue to remain in force for the time being.

What is the background?
In 2012, the UGC framed regulations aimed at promoting equity and preventing discrimination on university campuses.

These regulations defined "discrimination" as any act that nullifies or impairs equality of treatment in education, including denial of access to education, imposition of undignified conditions, or the maintenance of separate educational or social spaces on the basis of caste, creed, religion, language, ethnicity, gender, or disability. They also provided for the setting up of Equal Opportunity Cells and the appointment of an anti-discrimination officer as part of a grievance redressal mechanism.

After the suicide of Rohith Vemula in 2016 and Payal Tadvi in 2019, following allegations of caste discrimination, their mothers had moved the Supreme Court for stricter enforcement of the 2012 regulations.

During the course of the hearing of these petitions, the UGC constituted a committee to review the existing framework. The revised regulations published in 2026 were the culmination of this review.

A protest being held in Lucknow against the new UGC equity guidelines. SANDEEP SAXENA

Why are the 2026 regulations controversial?
The UGC Regulations, 2026 define 'discrimination' as any unfair, differential, or biased treatment against any stakeholder – students, faculty members, or staff – on the grounds of religion, race, caste, gender, place of birth, disability, or any of them.

The main controversy arose because of the definition of 'caste-based discrimination' in the new regulations. It is defined as discrimination solely based on caste or tribe against members of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes (SC, ST, and OBC).

Members of the general or unreserved categories have alleged that this is biased and presumes that they would always be the perpetrators of caste-based discrimination against underprivileged sections. Further, there are no provisions for punishing 'false' or 'motivated' complaints, which can adversely affect stakeholders.

What did the court rule?
In *Mritunjay Tiwari versus Union of India*, the Supreme Court observed that some provisions of the regulations are ambiguous and could be misused. Further, it has framed four 'substantive questions of law' to be addressed in this case, out of which the first two questions are pertinent to the current controversy.

First, whether a separate definition of 'caste-based discrimination' bears a reasonable nexus to the objectives of the regulations, and whether it is necessary, considering that the regulations already define 'discrimination' as including unfair or differential treatment on the grounds of caste. Second, whether this definition of 'caste-based' discrimination will affect the sub-classification of the underprivileged sections.

What constitutional principles are at stake?
Article 14 of the Constitution guarantees equality before the law and equal protection of the law. Article 15 prohibits discrimination by the State only on the grounds of race, religion, caste, sex, or place of birth. These provisions reflect the concept of 'formal' equality, which is essential in any democratic society. Article 15 also enables the State to make special provisions for OBC, SC, and ST. This reflects the concept of 'substantive' equality, which is based on the belief that formal equality is not sufficient to redress the difference between groups that have enjoyed privileges and those that have been historically underprivileged and discriminated against. This is pertinent not only for affirmative actions aimed at the advancement of backward classes but also for policies aimed at preventing discrimination. Laws like the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955, SC and ST (Prevention of atrocities) Act, 1989 are examples of such differential treatment.

It may be a valid argument that the 2026 regulations provide grievance redressal mechanisms against 'discrimination' and that a definition of 'caste-based discrimination' does not serve any additional purpose. However, the government is well within its rights to recognise a specific and serious subset of discrimination within the broader ambit of discrimination. In India, 'caste-based discrimination' is asymmetric and is more detrimental to SC, ST, and OBCs.

Nonetheless, educational campuses are meant to ideally foster the atmosphere of shedding caste identities; any ambiguity that may precipitate it should be avoided. The government may engage with all stakeholders to refine the regulations that would address the issues raised. More importantly, as per the original petition of aggrieved mothers in 2019, the regulations should be strictly enforced to protect the underprivileged from any form of discrimination.

Rangarajan R is a former IAS officer and author of 'Courseware on Polity Simplified.' He currently trains at Officers IAS academy. Views expressed are personal.

THE GIST

- The Supreme Court stays the UGC Regulations, 2026, citing ambiguity and possible misuse, and keeps the 2012 regulations in force.
- The dispute arises from the definition of 'caste-based discrimination', limited to SC, ST and OBCs, which is alleged to be biased and lacking safeguards against false complaints.
- The case raises questions on equality under Articles 14 and 15, and the need for a separate definition of caste-based discrimination in higher education.

Why are Meta and WhatsApp facing a judicial ultimatum?

What concern did the Supreme Court raise about digital literacy and consent?

John Xavier

The story so far:
For years, Meta, the parent company of WhatsApp, has treated user data as the "exhaust" of its messaging engine – a valuable byproduct to be harvested and refined for its advertising machine. But on February 3, India's Supreme Court suggested a different metaphor: theft. In a hearing, a three-judge Bench led by Chief Justice Surya Kant signalled that "consent" in the age of monopolies may be little more than a legal fiction. The court's observations go beyond simple privacy; they strike at the heart of Meta's business model, questioning whether a platform's market dominance renders the "choice" to share data essentially coercive.

When and where did the friction begin?
The friction began in 2021, when WhatsApp issued a "take-it-or-leave-it" update to its privacy policy. The update allowed for increased data sharing between the messaging app and its parent, Meta. While WhatsApp insisted that end-to-end encryption kept messages private, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) saw the move as an abuse of dominance. It argued that for the average Indian user, "leaving" WhatsApp is not a viable option. The CCI slapped Meta with a ₹213.14 crore ($25m) penalty – a sum that is pocket change for a trillion-dollar company, but a significant regulatory shot across the bow.

Meta then appealed the decision in the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT), which last year delivered a nuanced, if controversial, verdict. The NCLAT upheld the CCI's finding that Meta had abused its market position. However, it significantly "softened" the regulatory blow.

While it retained the financial penalty, the NCLAT set aside a crucial CCI directive that would have barred Meta from sharing user data with its other entities for advertising purposes for a period of five years. The NCLAT appeared to argue that while the method of obtaining consent was coercive, the act of sharing data across a parent and subsidiary was a standard business practice.

The tribunal likely feared that a total five-year moratorium on data-sharing was a disproportionate "structural remedy" that could break the technical synergy of Meta's platforms. Furthermore, with the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act of 2023 looming on the horizon, the NCLAT seemed content to let privacy-specific legislation handle the nuances of data flows.

Why did Meta appeal to the SC?
Unhappy with the penalty and NCLAT's verdict, Meta eventually reached the Supreme Court. However, the apex court seemed in no mood for compromise. Chief Justice Kant's retort to Meta's lawyers – that opting out of WhatsApp in India is akin to "opting out of the country" – captures the "network effect" trap that competition regulators globally are struggling to dismantle.

Yet, the most provocative argument came from Justice Joymalya Bagchi, who shifted the debate from privacy to "value." India's DPDP Act of 2023 focuses primarily on the sanctity of personal information. But Justice Bagchi noted a vacuum in the law regarding the "rent-sharing" of data. If Meta uses a rural Indian's behavioural trends to sell targeted ads, who owns the profit derived from that data?

This "data-as-property" logic aligns India more closely with the European Union's Digital Services Act than with the more laissez-faire approach of the U.S. By impleading the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, the court forced the government to consider whether privacy is enough, or if the economic "value" of a citizen's digital footprint requires a new form of sovereign protection.

What happens next?
The Solicitor General's remark – that users are "not only consumers, but also products" – reflects a growing fatigue with the "free" internet model.

Meta's defence remains rooted in the "cleverly-crafted" language of terms and conditions. But the Chief Justice's "simple query" regarding whether a domestic helper could navigate such a policy serves as a reminder that in a country with varying levels of digital literacy, transparency is not the same as understanding.

The court has issued an ultimatum: Meta must provide an undertaking to stop sharing personal data, or face the dismissal of its case and "very strict conditions." As the case heads toward interim directions on February 9, the message is clear. In the eyes of the Indian judiciary, a billion "silent consumers" are no longer willing to be the raw material for Meta's bottom line. The era of "decent theft" may be coming to a close.

THE GIST

- The Supreme Court questions Meta's business model, holds that 'consent' in a monopolistic WhatsApp ecosystem may be coercive, and shifts the debate from privacy to the 'value' and 'rent-sharing' of user data.
- The case stems from WhatsApp's 2021 'take-it-or-leave-it' privacy policy, the CCI's finding of abuse of dominance, the NCLAT's partial relief to Meta, and the court's warning of "very strict conditions" unless data-sharing stops.

HC: *Prima facie* in situ rehabilitation may not be possible

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka on Wednesday said that it *prima facie* accepts that in situ rehabilitation of evicted families may not be feasible in Fakir Colony and Waseem Colony of Kogilu Layout, where the authorities had demolished around 167 sheds illegally built by encroaching upon government land.

A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice C.M. Poonacha made this observation in its interim order during the hearing of a PIL petition filed by Zaiba Tabassum, Rehana and Areefa Begum, who were among the persons evicted from the two colonies.

Landfill site

The Bench recorded its *prima facie* view after noticing the stand of the State government that no rehabilitation can be permitted on the government lands, where the colonies had come up, as toxic waste is stored in the land, as it was earlier used as a landfill for dumping city's mixed garbage.

One of the requests made in the petition was for providing rehabilitation on the same government land from where they were evicted.

Meanwhile, the Bench appointed advocate Vidyulatha B.V. as *amicus curiae* and asked her to file a report on the demolished land, temporary rehabilitation centres set up by the civic bodies in four community halls, and facilities in these centres. The Bench directed the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority to assist her.

Earlier, State Advocate General K. Shashi Kiran Shetty told the court that of the seven allotment letters produced by the petitioners, three belong to lands outside the encroached land and no files with regard to other four letters could be traced.

Centres locked

Meanwhile, advocates for the petitioners complained to the Bench that some rehabilitation centres were found locked when the evicted persons visited and even the contact number displayed in the centre was erroneous.

Kogilu demolition: Only 29 families may get houses

A Housing Dept. official says beneficiaries include families who have been living in the area for nearly 17 years and others who moved in as recently as seven months ago

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

Only 29 families out of an initial estimate of 145, as pegged by the Housing Corporation during the last survey, will receive houses in the first phase of rehabilitation following the Kogilu demolition, which razed more than 160 houses in Fakir Colony and parts of Waseem Layout in Yelahanka on December 20. The limited number of beneficiaries and the lack of clarity regarding the criteria have prompted objections from displaced residents.

Evicted families set up makeshift tents on rocky debris at Kogilu Layout in Bengaluru.. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

A senior official from the Housing Department told *The Hindu* that the list of 29 beneficiaries includes families who have been living in the area for nearly 17 years as well as others who moved in as recently as seven months ago. Meanwhile, a senior official from the Housing Corporation added that all eligible poor families can apply for housing under the Ashraya Yojana, and that the Ashraya Committee takes a final call on allotments based on documents submitted, but many from Fakir Colony and surrounding areas have not applied under the scheme.

A senior official from the Housing Corporation says all eligible poor families can apply under Ashraya Yojana, and that the Ashraya panel takes the final call on allotments

165 displaced families

Representatives of the displaced families, however, have questioned this, pointing out that satellite imagery from seven months prior showed only small water bodies in parts of the area now listed for rehabilitation. They argue that long-settled households should have been prioritised over more recent occupants.

Of the more than 165 families displaced, only 29 were called to Hajj Bhavan recently, where they met senior officials from the Housing and Minority Welfare Departments and submitted bank passbooks, domicile, income, and caste certificates, ration cards, Aadhaar, and voter ID cards. Several other displaced families said they possess the same documents but were neither surveyed properly nor called for verification, with no explanation for their exclusion.

Irregularities alleged

NGO representatives and slum leaders have alleged irregularities in the selection process. According to them, at least nine of the 29 beneficiaries are closely linked to an intermediary, to whom they allegedly paid around ₹2 lakh each to secure houses in the area.

Representatives have submitted a list of what they say are eligible households to Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda and have sought clarification from the Housing Corporation on the eligibility criteria.

They maintain that many families excluded from the survey meet all documentary requirements and should have been considered.

Malaysian IDEAS delegation visits BU

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A Malaysian delegation led by Tunku Zain Al-Abidin, head of the 'Institute of Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS),' Malaysia, visited Bangalore University (BU) as part of their official visit to India, and held discussions with Vice-Chancellor Jayakara S.M. and the University Deans.

The meeting focused on exploring avenues for collaboration between Bangalore University and Malaysian universities, including Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), student exchange programmes, joint academic and research initiatives, international conferences, academic workshops, innovation promotion, and cultural exchange programmes, according to a press release.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Open Tender Notice No. BE-29-2025-26-OT-29 (Through E-Tendering)

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work:

Tender No	Description in Work	Approx. Value	Tender Closing Date Time
BE-29-2025 -26-OT-29	1) Provision of electrical supply for installation of HABD in Bengaluru Division. 2) Proposed Road-1A on Rd-01 side at Nidvanda in Yasvantpur - Sampige Road Section. 3) KSR Bengaluru - Replacing Low height shelter of PF 7 & 8, Provision of shelter in open area between second entry building and platform entrance including granite flooring. 4) Balance work of Modernization of Infrastructure at Dharmapuri Good Shed-Electrical arrangements	Rs. 1,54,38,265/-	23-02-2026 / 15:00 Hrs

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Keep visiting the website for any corrigendum till closing date

PUB/863/AAF/PRB/SWR/2025-26 Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/General /Bengaluru

Download the UTS Mobile App from Google Play Store for ease of booking of unreserved tickets

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRAILWAYHQ | sw_railways

No.27-7/2018-Lib
Government of India
Ministry of Culture
Library Section

RECRUITMENT

This is to inform that the Ministry of Culture invites applications for the post of **Director General on deputation** (including short term contract) basis in Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation, Kolkata, an autonomous organisation under the Ministry. The detailed advertisement may be seen on the Ministry's website **(https://culture.gov.in/)**

The last date for submission of the applications is 60 days from the date of publication of this advertisement in the Employment News/Rozgar Samachar.

CBC 09101/11/0035/2526

UTTAR PRADESH MEDICAL SUPPLIES CORPORATION LTD.
(A Government of Uttar Pradesh Undertaking)

Tender Notice

Tender Ref. No: UPMSCL/Drugs-246/24 Dated: 2nd February, 2026

e-TENDER FOR SUPPLY OF DRUGS

Online tenders are invited from licensed manufacturers for supply of drugs to UPMSCL. The details of tender, list of items and Tender Documents are made available on website https://etender.up.nic.in and www.upmsc.in. The last date/time of online submission of the tender documents is 17th February, 2026 upto 15:00 Hrs.

Managing Director
UPMSCL, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
Department of Medical Health & Family Welfare, Uttar Pradesh

DOCUMENTS LOST

We, Chayadevi. S W/o. Basavaraju. D and D. Basavaraju S/o Late K.S. Doddaiah R/at No.54, 4th Cross, Kanakapura Main Road, Opp. Sarrakki Gate, Gangadhar Nagar, Bengaluru-560078 do hereby solemnly state that, we are the joint owners of the property bearing No.526/4, Vasanthapura Village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bengaluru South, Measuring East to West: 40 feet and North to South: 60 feet. We have purchased this said property from one A.N. Raghu Kumar S/o Late A.N.N. Iyengar. The Original Sale Deed registered on 09.07.2004 with Registeration No.KEN-1-14218/2004-05, Book No.1, stored in CD No.KEND114 is lost by us. In this regard we have raised a Police Complaint on 03.02.2026 and have obtained Lost Report No.2042322/2026. We further state that above mentioned details are true to our knowledge vide affidavit dated 04.02.2026 sworn to Notary Lakshmaiah.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Tender Reference No. ECN-01-2026

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work:

Name of work	Approx. Value
Arranging additional High Tension Power supply to an extant dedicated feeder for 1150KVA (Existing 350KVA) totaling to 1500KVA from pottery Road to Bengaluru Cantonment Railway station.	Rs. 1,12,52,164.02

Last date for submission of bids:
Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 18-02-2026

For d tails log one www.ireps.gov.in
Keep visiting the website for any corrigendum till closing date

Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer/Traction Distribution (Construction) Bengaluru Cantonment
PUB/856/AAF/PRB/SWR/2025-26

Download the UTS Mobile App from Google Play Store for ease of booking of unreserved tickets

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRAILWAYHQ | sw_railways

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that my client **Sri. Jayaraj Sabarad has lost the originals of Sale deed** executed by **Sri. N Srinivasa** and **M/s Vaishnavi Infrastructure Corridor Enterprises Pvt. Ltd.**, in favour of **Sri. Vikram Prabhakar** registered as **document No. 1733/19-20** in the office of the **Sub-registrar Rajajinagar** in respect of **Apartment No. A-109**, measuring **1410 Sq. feet** and **Discharge deed dated 21-06-2019c** executed by **Tumkur Grain Merchant's Co-operative Bank Ltd.**, in favour of **Vikram Prabhakar** registered as **document No. 3195/19-20** in the office of the **Sub-registrar Rajajinagar** on **24-12-2021**. Inspite of best efforts same could not be traced.

He had also lodged a complaint in this regard before the **Bangalore City Police on 02-02-2026** vide **lost report No. 2039849/2026 and 2039879/2026**.

Therefore, it is requested that the general public who ever may find the said original documents or person in possession of the said documents shall hand over the same to the undersigned **within 7 days** from the date of this publication.

Smt. Shrilata Hegde, **Advocate**
C-203, Goodearth Terraces,
Kumbalagodu - 560074.
Mob : 9481119935.
Bangalore/Dated : 04-02-2026.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Publication of Corrigendum to Tender Notice No. CAO/CN/BNC/133/2025 dated 29.07.2025

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Auction for the following work.

Sl.No.	Item of Work	Approx.Value
1.	RFP for Construction of New Broad Gauge line including Electrical, Signal & Telecommunication works between Jumlapur Road (Excl) Ch: 75400 and Gurgunta(incl) Ch: 134950 (59.55 km) under GADAG-WADI New line Project on EPC Mode.. **(Tender Ref. No. JUMLAPUR- GURGUNTA-EPC)**	Rs. 964,51,54,197/-

Date of Closing	
Existing	Modified
12.02.2026 (15.00 Hrs.)	17.03.2026 (15.00 Hrs.)

For details log on : **www.ireps.gov.in**

Deputy Chief Engineer/Construction/Works, Bengaluru Cantonment
PUB/871/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26

Download the **UTS** Moblie App from **Google Play Store** for ease of booking of unreserved tickets

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | @SWRAILWAYHQ | @sw_railways

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice

For and on behalf of President of Republic of India, Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/Construction-II) North Western Railway, Jaipur invites E-Tender for the following works upto 15.00 Hrs. on the mentioned date. **Name of work:** Tender No. EL-C-JP-T06-25-26, Modification of LT/HT (0.22/0.44/11/33 Kv) power line crossings in connection with Ringas-Khatushyam ji new Railway line project, **Approximate cost of the Work:** Rs 19054482.00, **Earnest Money to be deposited:** Rs. 245300.00, **Date & Time of closing E-Tender:** 25.02.2026 Upto 15-00 Hrs., **Date & Time of opening E-Tender:** , 25.02.2026 at 15.30 Hrs., **The details of above E-Tender are available on Website:** www.ireps.gov.in. **167-PS/26**

Follow us at /NWRailways NWRailways_

IN THE COURT OF THE SENIOR CIVIL JUDGE & JMFC AT ANEKAL
O.S. No. 451 OF 2017

Between:
Sri Rajeevan V. S/o K. Koman Aged about 43 years, residing Aiswarya Nandanam B Street, Jog Palya, Ulsoor, Bangalore-560008. **...Plaintiff**
And:
Smt. Prema. **...Defendant**

SUIT SUMMONS TO DEFENDANT

Defendant: Smt Prema, W/o Arun, aged about 57 years, residing at No.H-21, Sri Rama Nagar, Munigesh Palya, Bangalore-560017and also at H-21, Near Madhusudan Rice Trader, K.R. Garden Main Road, HAL Post, Murugesh Palya, Bangalore-17.

You are here by informed that the above said Plaintiff has filed the above suit against you for the relief of Specific Performance of Contract and Permanent Injunction in respect of the Site bearing No. 51. Khatha No. 75, measuring East:50, West: 52 and North:46, South: Road, situated at Chikkanaganangalal Village, Kudlu Grama-Panchayath, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore.

Since the Defendant whose last address is furnished herein above is residing in the said address, but is evading to receive the Summons sent by this Hon'ble Court. This Summons is published as per the orders of this Honorable Court Dated 21-01-2026. Hence the above case is posted on are hereby informed to take Summons of the above case is posted **on 22.04.2026 at 11.00 AM** for your appearance in person or through the pleader, failing which matter will be heard Ex parte. Given under my hand and seal of the Court on this day **21.01.2026**

By Order of the Court
Chief Ministerial Officer
Senior Civil Judge & JMFC Court
Anekal.

Advocate for Plaintiff:
C.V. Siju Law Links, Advocates
No. 307, 3rd Floor, Sophia's Choice,
St. Mark's Road, Bengaluru-560001

PUBLIC NOTICE

The public are hereby informed that my client is intend to purchase the below mentioned, property from **Sri. M.S.Umashankar** S/O Late Shankarappa B, **Pushpa C.N** W/O Sri. M.S.Umashankar and **Master Eshanth U** S/O M.S. Umashankar since minor represented by his natural guardian Father Sri. M.S.Umashankar, Residing at No. 36/106, 12th Cross, 11th Main, Malleswaram, Bangalore–560003.

Any person/s having any objections/claims, share, maintenance, demand, interest, possession, authority whatsoever manner including previous agreement holders or General Power of Attorney Holders may claim their objections over the schedule properties or any portion thereof in any manner should lodge the same in writing to the undersigned within **7 days** hereof along with copies of all the documents being relied upon or otherwise my client will proceed to purchase the schedule properties and we are not responsible for any claim's or litigation in future.

SCHEDULE

All pieces and parcel of the Residential property bearing **site No. 19,** Previous Katha No. 403; BBMP Katha No. 1835; measuring East-West: **35 feet;** North-South: **40 feet;** totally measuring **1400 Sq. Ft** (130.1 sq. mtrs); Previous Sy. No 10; Present Sy. No. 10/1 and 10/2; **T.Dasarahalli Village, Yeshwanthapura Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk;** Converted land for non-agricultural purpose bearing **Order No. ALN.No.38/37-38** Dated: 05/04/1937 by the Tahsildar Bangalore; Presently comes under the jurisdiction of Greater Bangalore Authority North Division (Previously BBMP) **Ward No. 15** having **E-PID: 3983602969;** Sanctioned Building Plan and License vide No. **BBMP/Ad.com/DSH/0115/2021-22,** dated 29/09/2021 having a residential building consisting of Ground Floor, First Floor and Second Floor; totally measuring a super built up area of **2705 Sq. Ft** (251.27 Sq. Mts); And bounded on:

EAST : 20 Feet Road;
WEST : Other's Property;
NORTH : 16 Feet Road;
SOUTH : Other's Property

Monica H Kariyappa, B.E., LL.M,
Advocate,
KARIYAPPA LAW ASSOCIATE'S
Office: No. 13, 3rd Main Road, Srikanteshwaranagar, Mahalakshmi Layout, Bangalore - 560096
Mob: 96200 66788.
E-mail: monica.Kariyappa@gmail.com

SHRI SAIBABA SANSTHAN TRUST, SHIRDI
At.Post. Shirdi, Tal- Rahata, Dist. A.Nagar - 423 109 . Phone No.(02423) 258500/771/772, Fax No.02423-258870
(Website www.sai.org.in) E-mail - purchase@sai.org.in

E-Tender Notice

E-tenders are invited from Manufacturers Only for the supply of Pure Cow Ghee for our Laddu Nirmiti, Prasadalaya & Temple Department for the year 2026-27.

01. E-Tender Information, Criteria and terms & conditions are available on Sansthan's website www.sai.org.in
02. The E-Tender is available for Downloading & Uploading from 05/02/2026 11.00 AM to 27/02/2026 up to 5 PM. on Government website www.mahatenders.gov.in

Sd/-
Goraksha Gadilkar, I.A.S
Chief Executive Officer,

DGIPR/2025/2026/5537

ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES
ANSARI NAGAR, NEW DELHI – 110 029
EXAMINATION SECTION
Advertisement No. 377/2025

Recruitment Examination for Scientist-B (Non-Medical) for ICMR Headquarters and its Institutes/Centres

Online applications are invited from Indian Citizens for recruitment to various Group-B (Non -Medical) posts for ICMR Headquarters and its Institutes/Centres. Details & eligibility of posts can be seen with advertisement available on AIIMS website **i.e. www.aiimsexams.ac.in**. The Examination will be conducted in online (CBT) mode only followed by interview for shortlisted candidates.

Online Registration for applications	
Opens on	Closes on
02nd February, 2026 (Monday)	01st March, 2026 at 5:00 pm (Sunday)

Date of Recruitment Examination

Date of Exam	Examination Centre in the State
Tentative in the month of April, 2026	Delhi/NCR Only

Important: All applicants are required to visit the AIIMS website i.e. **www.aiimsexams.ac.in** regularly since all subsequent Corrigendum/Addendum/Updates will be uploaded in the website only.

Sd/-
CBC 17112/12/0069/2526 **ASSISTANT CONTROLLER (EXAMS.)**

Government of India - Ministry of Finance
Department of Financial Services
DEBT RECOVERY TRIBUNAL - I KARNATAKA
4th Floor, Telephone House, Raj Bhavan Road, Bengaluru - 560001

Form No. 14
[See Regulation 33(2)] By Regd.
A/D, Dasti failing which by Publication

DEMAND NOTICE

NOTICE UNDER SECTIONS 25 TO 28 OF THE RECOVERY OF DEBTS & BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1993 AND RULE 2 OF SECOND SCHEDULE TO THE INCOME TAX ACT, 1961, As Amended

RC / 515 / 2025

16-12-2025

THE FEDERAL BANK LIMITED
Versus
SRI. CHAMAKURI UMA MAHESH NAIDU

In the Matter of :
(CH-1)
THE FEDERAL BANK LIMITED
Branch Hirandahalli, Sy.No. 81/1, Hiranadahalli Main Road,
Opp. Aswathakatte Virgonagar PO, K.R. Pura, Bangalore, Karnataka.
Rep. by its Branch Manager and PA Holder.

... Applicant(s)

--- Versus ---

To,
(CD-1) Sri. Chamakuri Uma Mahesh Naidu S/o. Sri. Chamakuri Venkateshwara Rao Naidu
Villa No. 4A4, Vaishnavi Anantya, Near Indus School, A-3, Sy.No. 119/2,
Mendhalli, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru - 562125, Karnataka.
(CD-2) Smt. Indrani Naidu W/o. Chamakuri Uma Mahesh Naidu
Villa No. 4A4, Vaishnavi Anantya, Near Indus School, A-3, Sy.No. 119/2,
Mendhalli, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru - 562125, Karnataka.
Also At : No. 3-4-174/80, Kantha Reddy Nagar Attapur, Hyderabad, Telangana - 500068.
Also At : No. 49, Codrington Crescent Mission Reddy, Auckland 1071, New Zealand, Non India State, Non India.
Also At : No. 31, Bledsole Street, Papa Toetoe Auckland 2104, New Zealand, Non India State, Non India.
(CD-3) Sri. Venkatesha .S S/o. Srinivasa
R/at Sumukh Nilaya, 12th Main, 4th Cross, Sherryas Colony, Gourav Nagar,
J.P. Nagar, 7th Phase, Bangalore - 560 078, Karnataka.

... Defendant(s)

Sr. No.	CH Name	Int Type / Mode	Int. Rate	Effective Date	Order Date	Amount	Interest as on Order Date	RC Amount
1.	The Federal Bank Limited	Simple Interest (Yearly)	10.75% P.A.	27/09/2021	31/05/2024	36920827.76	0	36920827.76
		Simple Interest (Yearly)	9.90% P.A.	27/09/2021	31/05/2024	770717.86	0	770717.86
								37691545.62

This is to notify that as per the Recovery Certificate issued in pursuance of orders passed by the Presiding Officer, **DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL BANGALORE (DRT 1) in O.A./844/2021** an amount of **Rs. 37691545.62 (Rupees Three Crore Seventy Six Lakhs Ninety One Thousand Five Hundred Forty Five and Paise Sixty Two Only)** Out of which the sum of **(i) Rs. 3,69,20,827.76 (Rupees Three Crores Sixty Nine Lakhs Twenty Thousand Eight Hundred and Twenty Seven and Paise Seventy Six Only)** with pendentelite and future interest at the rate of **10.75% p.a. from 27.09.2021** till date of realization from defendants 1 & 3 / Certificate Debtors 1 & 3 and (ii) further sum of **Rs. 7,70,717.86 (Rupees Seven Lakh Seventy Thousand Seven Hundred Seventeen and Paise Eighty Six Only) @ 9.90% p.a.** Simple Interest Yearly **w.e.f. 27-09-2021** till realization and costs of **Rs. 1,88,000 (Rupees One Lakh Eighty Eight Thousands Only)** has become due against you (Jointly and Severally / Fully / Limited)

Certificate Debtors :-
1. Sri. Chamakuri Uma Mahesh Naidu
2. Smt. Indrani Naidu
3. Sri. Venkatesh .S

2. You are hereby directed to pay the above sum within 15 days of the receipts of the notice, failing which the recovery shall be made in accordance with the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 and Rules there under.
3. You are hereby ordered to declare on an affidavit the particulars of yours assets on or before the next date of hearing.
4. You are hereby ordered to appear before the undersigned **on 02/02/2026 AT 10.30 A.M.** for further proceedings.
5. In addition to the sum aforesaid, you will also be liable to pay :

(a) Such interests as is payable for the period commencing immediately after this notice of the certificate / execution proceedings.

(b) All costs, charges and expenses incurred in respect of the service of this notice and warrants and other processes and all other proceedings taken for recovering the amount due.

Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal, on this **Date : 16/12/2025**

(SANJIV KUMAR)
Recovery Officer - I

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Office of the Deputy General Manager - 3,
1st Floor, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru -560052.

No. DGM-3/BSWML/Tend/21/2025-26 **Date: 04-02-2025**

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT)
(Through GOK KPPP only)

The Deputy General Manager-3, Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited on behalf of the Managing Director, BSWML, Bengaluru invites tender from eligible tenderers for the services mentioned in the table below. The tenderers may submit tenders for services through KPP portal of the Government of Karnataka (viz. https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in).

SL No	Name of the services	Estimate amount of services (Rs. In Lakhs)	Duration	EMD Amount in Rs.
01	Providing exposure visit service for Pourakarmikas as part of the capacity-building programme.	489.34	06 Months	7,34,010.00
02	Providing exposure visit service for the Executive officials and Technical officials as part of the capacity-building programme.	140.17	06 Months	2,10,255.00

Calendar of Events:

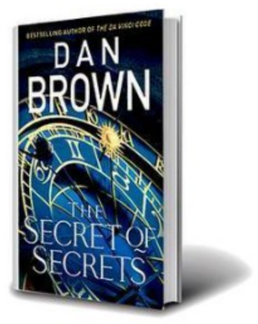
1. Last date to upload pre-bid queries: **10.02.2026 upto 15.00 Hrs**. in KPP Portal.
2. Pre bid meeting: **11.02.2026 at 15.00 Hrs** at the office of CE & CGM (Tech), BSWML, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanthanagar, Bangalore.
3. Last date for submission of the bids: **16.02.2026 upto 16.00 Hrs.**
4. Date of opening of Technical bid on: **17.02.2026 at 16.30 Hrs.**
5. Date of opening of Financial bids to be notified to technically qualified bidders.

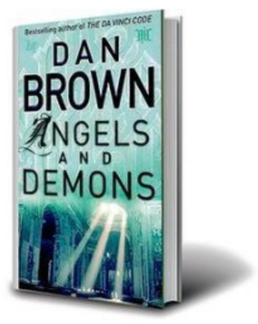
Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-3
BSWML

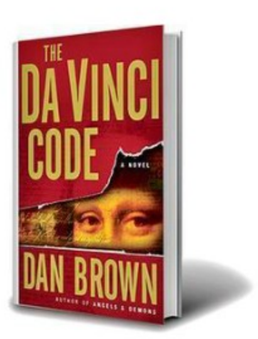
DIPR/CP/5434/NR/2025-26

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dan Brown. NYT







Science vs religion: Dan Brown's pursuit to bridge the divide continues

Gone are the days when the protagonist, Robert Langdon, was sent off on a globe-trotting adventure thriller; in the latest title, Langdon seems to have a less important role in the narrative, but the core philosophical argument remains what Brown has always posited through his books

Archisman Ghosh

A reader who last encountered Dan Brown in his global bestseller *The Da Vinci Code* would be surprised to read his latest, *The Secret of Secrets*. At first casual glance, it would seem that just about everything about the series has changed in the intervening 22 years except the protagonist, Harvard symbologist Robert Langdon, who has remained curiously, obstinately, and almost literally stuck-in-time.

The Secret of Secrets begins when a manuscript written by Katherine Solomon, the foremost scientist working on the (pseudo)scientific concept of non-localised consciousness, is stolen by unknown persons, and Solomon herself goes missing. Her partner, Langdon, must evade capture by the police for a suspected bomb threat while trying to figure out what the "secret of secrets" that Solomon planned to reveal in her book truly was, in order to find who might want to suppress it and where Solomon herself might be.

As is evident, this is a far cry from Brown's usual globe-trotting adventure-thriller like *The Da Vinci Code* or *Angels and Demons,* where Langdon rushes against time to uncover a long-buried historical mystery following a trail of clues and hidden symbols.

Move away from history

The focus in *The Secret of Secrets* has almost completely moved away from history, with Brown talking about the historical background of each monument that Langdon visits, but never truly making them a part of the story except as a prop or a backdrop. Brown has also moved away from the usage of a historical and physical MacGuffin, choosing instead the intangible, far-fetched, and scientific principle of non-localised consciousness to drive his plot. Langdon surprisingly never plays an important enough role in the narrative, and his skills as a symbologist are barely tested. It is Solomon's knowledge that moves the narrative, and her motivations that drive it chiefly. However, a closer analysis may reveal that these changes are not as drastic as they seem on the surface and are actually in line with the core philosophical argument that Brown has always posited through his books.

Two sides of a conflict

Throughout human history, religion and science have been placed at two ends of a spectrum. Since the 19th century, the rapid advancement of science and increased public interest in logic and rationality as a direct result of industrialisation and other developments, such as Darwin's theory of evolution has gradually led to the loss of the absolute authority of the divine, and hence, in Nietzschean terms, to the death of God. Brown situates his book continually in the chasm that arises out of this socio-historical rivalry – in *Angels and Demons,* this divide is most on the face: the literal Catholic Church is put under threat by the Gods of Science. While this strain is not immediately pronounced in his other novels, it can definitely be identified as the undercurrents driving the plot. In *Inferno*, a billionaire geneticist, inspired by Dante's vision of Hell, creates a global virus to control the problem of overpopulation. *Origin* deals with the murder of a futurist-scientist on the eve of a revelation that threatens to destabilise the very base of all religions by disproving the source of absolute divine authority - that God created the world. *The Da Vinci Code*, too, asserts the (scientific) humanity of Jesus by deconstructing his religious image and depicting him as a living, breathing human capable of procreation. As is plainly evident in all his writings, Brown is thoroughly concerned with investigating the basis of the science/religion schism, and thus, his focus on a mystery of science instead of a mystery of religion and history in *The Secret of Secrets* is not new, and has been, in varying degrees, a common developing thematic concern throughout his bibliography.

Langdon's role

One might wonder why Langdon, unlike the series' narrative focus, has not only remained constant but has also not undergone any growth in his personal philosophies or belief systems. This queer stagnation of Langdon's character and Brown's frequent, deliberate, almost amnesiac avoidance of the events that have occurred in the series previously is reminiscent of other recurring central characters such as those in detective fiction, where the central character does not need to change or grow with the successive narratives as the primary aim and focus of the writer is on the plot itself, and the intricacies of each individual case. The writer does not need to undertake the heavy burden of specific characterisation beyond a general one as most of their book are plot and not character driven.

Similarly, Brown's plots themselves carry the burden of entertainment and, albeit veiled, philosophical commentary. While Langdon can be the agent that moves the story along, in most cases, his only contribution is his academic knowledge. He is a man squarely situated in the realm of religion and history, who is continually thrown into a world of science, from which he must barter a peace.

Glorified action hero

A curious by-product of Brown's gradual shift away from writing an action-adventure book to something that is essentially science fiction, then, is the reduction in importance of Robert Langdon. As the series has moved more and more away from a world of religion into one of science, Langdon's overall impact on the narrative has decreased as well. Thus, in *The Secret of Secrets*, dealing almost completely with scientific conflicts and mysteries, Langdon is nothing more than a glorified action hero who occasionally gives lectures on history.

In conclusion, it must be noted that none of Brown's novels would reach positive conclusions without the amalgamation of Langdon's religion/history with the opponent's science. Further, none of the stories themselves has a definitive ending where either science or religion triumphs. Brown always negotiates a temporary peace through which the rivalry, though retained, is momentarily put on hold. Brown has always questioned the creation of binaries, and has been changing his narratives to reflect the evolution of his final, and ultimate philosophical argument – that the two world-views are not inherently oppositional or mutually exclusive. In reality, they are linked in a symbiotic relationship, acting as separate parts of a wholistic socio-historic picture which would be left incomplete without one or the other.

Archisman Ghosh studies English at St. Xavier's College, Kolkata

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

Nuclear weapons are world's most closely guarded objects, yet countries in conflict have not infrequently misplaced weapons-grade material before. A quiz about some of them

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1

On February 5, 1958, the U.S. Air Force lost a hydrogen bomb named 'Tybee' near Georgia city and never recovered it. What is the U.S. military's term for such accidental events?

QUESTION 2

In 1968, a U.S. B-52 aircraft carrying four thermonuclear bombs crashed onto the sea ice off the coast of _____. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 3

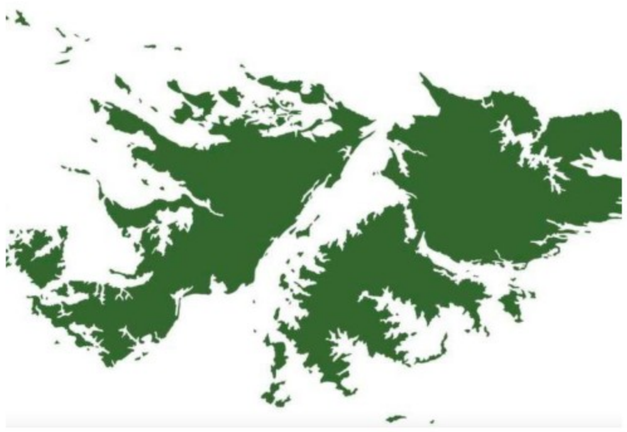
After the Soviet Union collapsed, a former Russian national security advisor named X said the Russian military had lost track of roughly 100 "suitcase-sized" nuclear devices. Name X.

QUESTION 4

In 1968, a Soviet submarine sank in the Pacific Ocean near Hawaii while carrying three nuclear missiles and two nuclear torpedoes. In 1974, the CIA attempted a secret $800-million recovery mission called Project Y. They reportedly managed to lift a portion of the submarine before the part containing the missiles allegedly broke off and fell back down. Name Y.

QUESTION 5

In 1965, the CIA and Indian Intelligence tried to install a plutonium-powered monitoring device atop _____ ____. But by spring, they found an avalanche had swept the equipment away, thus leaving 5 kg of plutonium unaccounted for. Fill in the blanks.



Visual Question:

Name these islands. During a conflict involving them in 1982, In 2003, one of the countries involved in the conflict admitted that two vessels it had lost in the conflict carried nuclear depth charges.

ROB984 (CC BY-SA)

Question and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. Name the four grand slam tournaments? **Ans: Wimbledon, the French open, the Australian open, and the U.S. Open**

2. What is a golden slam? **Ans: winning the four grand slams and Olympic gold**

3. Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal, and Novak Djokovic are considered the 'big three' of tennis. Who among them has not completed the golden slam? **Ans: Roger Federer**

4. Name the first male and female players to complete calendar grand slams in the open era? **Ans: Rod Laver and Margaret Court**

5. Who is the first male player to complete a golden slam? **Ans: Andre Agassi**

Visual: Name this player who is the first ever to win a golden slam and the only one to achieve it in a calendar year? **Ans: Steffi Graf**

Early Birds: Pramod Singh | Vineet Giri | Varghese Joseph | Amit Kumar | Jisha Thakur

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

S. Upendran

"How do you pronounce discreet?"

"The first syllable 'dis' rhymes with 'miss', 'kiss', and 'hiss'. The 'ee' in the second syllable is like the 'ee' in 'feet', 'meet', and 'sheet'."

"The stress is on the second syllable 'creet', I suppose?"

"That's right. Do you know what 'discreet' means?"

"It means 'separate', 'distinct', doesn't it?"

"No. It means tactful. Someone who is discreet is very careful about what he says and how he behaves. Here's an example. Umesh's parents have been making discreet enquiries about Preeta."

"Are they planning on getting Umesh married?"

"Maybe."

"God help the girl. How about this example? Coming drunk to your father's office isn't a discreet thing to do."

"The detective walked discreetly along the aisles, keeping an eye on the mourners."

"In many of our movies, we see the hero and heroine maintain a discreet distance when they are in the presence of others."

"That's true."

"I have heard people say that Sailaja is very discreet. What do they mean by that?"

"It means that Sailaja can be trusted to keep your secrets."

"...you don't have to worry about her telling anyone."

"Exactly! Suresh's new secretary is very discreet."

"She isn't very discreet."

"If you tell her something, you can be pretty sure that she'll let the cat out of the bag. Secretaries are expected to be very discreet."

"Are you sure that discreet doesn't also mean separate?"

"Quite sure. The word that you are thinking of is spelt d..i..s..c..r..e..t..e. It is pronounced the same way as discreet."

"I see. And 'discrete' means separate?"

"Yes. It means separate, having an independent identity. For example, although the twins, Seetha and Geetha, look alike, they have discrete personalities."

"Most of the supermarkets that are coming up these days have no discrete identity. They all look alike."

"That's a good example. Your school, though small, has its own discrete identity."

"I'm not so sure about that. You see..."

"...while we are on the subject of schools, how did your cousin do in the entrance exam?"

"He failed."

"That's hard to swallow."

"...hard to swallow?"

"...when you say that something is hard to swallow, it means that it is difficult to believe."

"It's an informal expression, I suppose?"

"Exactly!"

"The news that Martina Hingis had lost in the first round at Wimbledon was hard to swallow."

"For many Pakistanis the defeat in the World Cup final was hard to swallow."

"Yes, it must have been hard to take in."

"Does it mean the same thing as hard to swallow?"

"Good guess. Let's get back to your cousin. How have his parents taken it?"

"Like you, they found it hard to swallow. But they are being very discreet about it."

Published in The Hindu on July 6, 1999

Word of the day

Inchoate:
only partly in existence; imperfectly formed

Synonyms: initial, budding, unorganised

Usage: *The policy was introduced in an inchoate form.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/inchoatepro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ɪnkəʊeɪt/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

CBCI general body held

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The 37th General Body Meeting of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) was held on Wednesday at St John's National Academy of Health Sciences, Bengaluru, centred on the theme "Faith and the Nation: The Church's Witness to India's Constitutional Vision". Over 200 Bishops from 174 Dioceses participated.

The gathering started with a Eucharistic celebration led by Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli, Apostolic Nuncio to India and Nepal, who urged Bishops to embody Christ's love through service to poor and marginalised.

CBCI president Archbishop Mar Andrews Thazhath emphasised the Church's duty to uphold constitutional values, and strengthen justice initiatives.

The Biennial Report was presented, new Bishops honoured, and departed Bishops remembered.

Tele MANAS helpline integrated with Namma 112

Officials say the move is aimed at ensuring faster, more appropriate responses to mental health emergencies, reducing delays, avoiding criminalisation or mismanagement of people in distress

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Tele MANAS, the Central government's 24×7 mental health helpline, has been formally integrated with the city's emergency response system, Namma 112, to allow emergency calls involving mental health crises to be directly routed to trained mental health professionals.

The integration programme was held on Wednesday in collaboration with the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS - Namma 112) and the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS).

With the integration, calls involving mental health distress received by Namma 112 will be transferred in real time to Tele-Manas counsellors for specialised intervention. At the same time, cases identified by Tele MANAS as psychiatric emergencies, such as imminent suicide risk, will be escalated to Namma 112 for on-ground support, including ambulance or police assistance.

Officials said the move is aimed at ensuring faster, more appropriate responses to mental health emergencies, reducing delays and avoiding criminalisation or mismanagement of people in distress. The collaboration is intended to bring a more humane and professional approach to crisis situations by combining emergency response infrastructure with mental health expertise.

Tele MANAS services can be accessed by the public through toll-free helpline number 14416, its official website, and email support, with additional outreach through a mobile application.

With the integration, calls involving mental health distress received by Namma 112 will be transferred in real time to Tele MANAS counsellors for specialised intervention. FILE PHOTO

Tele MANAS services can be accessed through toll-free number 14416, its official website, email support, and a mobile application

'28 of 34 robbery and dacoity cases on Mysuru–Bengaluru highway since 2022 solved'

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Home Minister G. Parameshwara has said that the police have solved 28 of the 34 cases of night-time robbery and dacoity reported on the Mysuru-Bengaluru National Highway (NH-275) and its service roads since the highway was opened in 2022.

In a written reply to a question by Madhu G. Made Gowda, MLC, in the Legislative Council recently, the Minister said that 34 cases involving late-night travellers were reported between 2022 and the end of 2025 along the highway and adjoining service roads.

Of the 22 robbery cases targeting travellers, 17 have been solved so far, leading to the arrest of 34 accused persons.

Among these cases, 12 were reported in Bengaluru South district, nine in Mandya district and one in Mysuru city limits. In addition, 12 cases of dacoity targeting travellers were reported on the highway, including seven in Bengaluru South district and five in Mandya district.

Parameshwara says highway patrol teams have been deployed round the clock in three shifts to curb robbery and dacoity on highways

Of these, 11 cases have been solved, and 56 accused persons have been arrested, the Minister informed the House.

Under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, a robbery committed by five or more persons is classified as dacoity.

Replying to another question on measures taken to curb robbery and dacoity on State and National Highways, Mr. Parameshwara said highway patrol teams have been deployed round the clock in three shifts.

Traffic violations

On traffic violations along the Mysuru-Bengaluru highway, the Minister said 19.27 lakh offences were recorded over the past two years. In 2024, 13,83,861 violation cases were registered, while 5,43,175 cases were booked in 2025. Fines amounting to ₹93,75,42,500 were imposed in 2024, of which ₹8,38,80,500 has been collected, leaving ₹85,36,62,000 pending.

In 2025, fines totalling ₹40,10,76,500 were imposed in connection with the 5,43,175 cases. Of this, ₹4,30,73,000 has been collected, while ₹35,80,03,500 is pending, according to the reply.

Girl runs away from home with younger brother after parents' scolding, found safe

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 13-year-old girl left home along with her nine-year-old brother reportedly after being reprimanded by their parents for not attending tuition classes, but was traced and reunited with her family on Tuesday.

Using their Aadhaar cards, the girl boarded government bus and availed free travel under the Shakti scheme.

She got a ticket for herself but managed to take her younger brother along without a ticket.

The children travelled as far as Bhadravati in Shivamogga district.

When the children did not return home, the worried parents launched a search and later lodged a missing complaint at the HAL police station.

The police alerted stations across Karnataka and circulated information through social media platforms.

CCTV camera footage analysis revealed that the siblings left their house carrying a bag and headed to the Majestic bus terminal.

The children were later spotted in Bhadravati where people recognised them based on messages circulated on social media and informed the police.

Based on this information, the HAL police coordinated with the local police station and brought the children safely back to Bengaluru.

The girl and her younger brother were later reunited with their parents after counselling.

East City Corporation examines adoption of LVC for Hoodi flyover

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The East City Corporation is looking into the feasibility of adopting a Land Value Capture (LVC) system for acquiring land required for the long-pending Hoodi flyover project, as land acquisition has emerged as a major bottleneck.

The issue was discussed at a meeting chaired by Corporation Additional Commissioner (Development) Lokhande Snehal Sudhakar, who said the refusal of landowners to accept Transferable Development Rights (TDR) and their demand for cash compensation had mainly delayed the project. However, cash compensation is not permissible under existing rules, prompting the Corporation to explore alternative mechanisms, he said.

Under LVC, a portion of the increase in land value resulting from public infrastructure investments, such as flyovers, road widening, Metro projects and other urban development, is recovered and reinvested into public projects. The Additional Commissioner said infrastructure development often leads to sharp appreciation in surrounding land values, and LVC allows part of this gain to be channelled back into public works.

Mr. Sudhakar noted that the LVC model is well suited to the Bengaluru East limits and could support planned growth. However, he flagged challenges in implementing the system.

Three held for throwing prohibited items into prison

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

The police arrested three persons on charges of throwing a mobile phone, cigarettes, and beedi into the Central Prison at Sogane, on the outskirts of Shivamogga.

The accused are Imran Pasha, 25, of Tipu Nagar, Syed Mallik, 22, of Tipu Nagar, and Alla Baksh, 20, of Ambedkar Nagar in the city. The packets contained a mobile phone, cigarettes, and beedis. The jail staff noticed the packets and informed the officer, who subsequently lodged the complaint.

The Tunga Nagar police registered under the Karnataka Prisons Act, 2022.

इण्डियन ओवरसीज़ बैंक
Indian Overseas Bank
Information Technology Department
Central Office: 763, Anna Salai, Chennai-600002

Indian Overseas bank (IOB) invites bids for the following:
GOVERNMENT E-MARKET PORTAL - SELECTION OF LICENSING SOLUTION PROVIDER (LSP) FOR RENEWAL OF MICROSOFT ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT FOR A PERIOD OF 3 YEARS
BID NO: GEM/2026/B/7176657 DATED 02.02.2026
The Above GEM Tender document is also available and can be downloaded from the following websites **www.iob.in** & **www.gem.gov.in** For Tender details and future amendments, if any, keep referring to the following website **www.gem.gov.in**

REGIONAL DEPUTY REGISTRAR (HOUSING) THANJAVUR
Co-operative Society Properties for sale
e-TENDER NOTICE

S.No	Tender Reference	Property Details
1	RRCHS/T1072/2026	Thanjavur Raja Rajan Co-operative Housing Society owned property sale. Thanjavur District, Thanjavur Town, Nilagiri Therkku thottam, Daniel Thomas Nagar Plot No 18 Land Area 35316 Sq.ft. Contact No: 9364566866

Tender Document Available	: https://tntenders.gov.in
Bid submission start date and Time	: 05.02.2026 at 09.00 AM
Bid submission End date and Time	: 07.03.2026 at 09.00 AM
Bid Opening Date and Time	: 09.03.2026 at 11.00 AM

DEPUTY REGISTRAR (HOUSING) THANJAVUR

HC: Litigants can directly approach High Court if police 'rejects' complaint

The court says procedure of approaching a superior officer and the Magistrate applies exclusively to cases of 'refusal' to record info and not to cases of 'rejection' by a reasoned endorsement

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A complainant can directly approach the High Court if a police station "rejects" the complaint, and there is no need for the complainant to first approach the superior police officer against the rejection of the complaint and later, if the superior officer too rejects it, to lodge a private complaint before the jurisdictional Magistrate, ruled the High Court of Karnataka.

The court said that the procedure of approaching a superior officer and the Magistrate, prescribed under Section 173(4) of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), applies exclusively to cases of "refusal" to record information and does not extend to cases of "rejection" of a complaint by a reasoned endorsement.

Rejection on merit

When the complaint is rejected on merits, the complainant is entitled to challenge the legality of such rejection directly, including by invoking the writ jurisdiction of the High Court, without being compelled to exhaust remedies that are inapposite to the nature of the grievance, the court said.

Justice Suraj Govindaraj passed the order while directing the police to register a First Information Report (FIR) based on a complaint lodged by B.H. Nagaraju of Bengaluru, who was allegedly cheated by his brother in real estate business. The police had given an endorsement to Mr. Nagaraju stating that "it is a civil dispute and it has to be redressed before a competent court".

Interpreting Section 173 (4) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), the court said that a "refusal" of complainant contemplated under Section 173(4) is for the scenario where the police officer either "does not receive the complaint at all, or having received it, chooses not to record it as required under law", without entering into any adjudicatory assessment of the allegations. In such circumstances, the court said, the statute obligates the complainant to first approach the Superintendent of Police, and only thereafter, if the grievance remains unredressed, to invoke the jurisdiction of the Magistrate.

Different footing

However, "rejection" of a complaint stands on a fundamentally different footing, the court said, while pointing out that it presupposes that the complaint has been received, taken on record, and consciously considered by the police authority. The grievance of the complainant then "shifts from one of administrative inaction to one of jurisdictional overreach or erroneous exercise of discretion," the court said.

In the present case, the court said, the station house officer has assumed unto himself the role of adjudicating the nature of the dispute, terming it as a civil dispute at the pre-registration stage, a function which is neither contemplated nor sanctioned by the statutory framework governing registration of FIRs.

Conflating the two

"This conscious 'rejection' transforms the character of the grievance and removes it from the ambit of Section 173(4) of BNS," the court said, while stating that asking the complainant to still traverse the remedies under Section 173 (4), firstly before the superior officer and later before the Magistrate, would "amount to conflating refusal with rejection".

"Such an interpretation would not only dilute the statutory scheme but would also permit the police to effectively insulate their decisions from judicial scrutiny by the mere issuance of an endorsement, however erroneous or unsustainable it may be," the court observed.

VTU to adopt 680 govt. high schools under National Service Scheme

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

To improve the quality of education, Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU) has initiated a move to adopt 680 government high schools across the State under the National Service Scheme (NSS).

In this regard, VTU has issued a circular along with the list of high schools implementing the NSS scheme, and has instructed the principals of all engineering colleges under its jurisdiction to submit details of the schools that can be adopted in their district limits.

The NSS, which was previously limited to universities and colleges, has been extended to high schools for the first time in the country in 2018-19 to instill a sense of social responsibility and service among students.

Currently, the NSS scheme is being implemented in 680 schools in 34 educational districts of the State with 20 schools in each district, for students of classes 8 and 9. Therefore, in order to improve the basic facilities in these schools and improve the quality of education, the State NSS Cell of the Department of Youth Empowerment & Sports had written to VTU to adopt these schools, according state NSS cell.

Infra support

After adoption, programmes should be organised to develop and promote government high schools. The NSS Cell has requested VTU to improve the level of education, organise awareness programs in schools in collaboration with reliable Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), improve basic facilities in government high schools and emphasize on learning basic English for students.

Awareness

According to the State NSS cell, in addition, it has been asked to organise other useful awareness programmes, including encouraging students who pass with low marks in government high schools to get higher marks, providing training in computer learning.

It was stated in the circular that the university that adopts these 680 government high schools will be provided with funds from the State NSS Cell.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, S. Vidyashankar, Vice-Chancellor of VTU, said, "For the first time, the State government has suggested starting an NSS unit in government schools. This will help in instilling a sense of social responsibility and service in students during their school days. We have now given a list of schools. Our VTU-affiliated engineering colleges have been advised to adopt the schools on their list. After adopting the schools, necessary steps will be taken to improve the quality of education by visiting those schools and doing *Shramdhan* (voluntary community service), instilling environmental awareness, and emphasising English and computer learning".

Expert panel to review engineering education amid falling demand for core branches in State

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka government has constituted a 10-member expert committee, headed by Prof. S. Sadagopan, former director of the International Institute of Information Technology Bangalore (IIITB), to make appropriate recommendations for reforming technical education.

Prof. Jagadish, Prof. S. Gopalakrishna and Prof. Y. Narahari of Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru; Shyam S. Rao, CTO of Carborundum Ltd.; S. Vidyashankar, Vice-Chancellor of Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU), Belagavi; Director of University Visvesvaraya College of Engineering (UVCE), Administrator of Karnataka Examination Authority (KEA), Deputy Secretary of Higher Education Department and Executive Director of Karnataka State Higher Education Council are members of the committee.

The government has directed the committee to conduct a study and review the intake of computer science and related courses, revise the curriculum of basic engineering courses as per the current industrial and employment requirements, take measures to attract students to basic engineering courses and other aspects and submit a report within a month.

During the admission process for professional undergraduate engineering courses through the KEA in the State for the academic year 2025-26, more than 9,000 seats in Computer Science and related disciplines remained unallocated.

In addition, in recent years, a large number of students who have passed Computer Science and related disciplines have remained unemployed.

On the other hand, the admission rate in basic engineering courses such as mechanical, civil, and electrical engineering, and others, is decreasing significantly. These courses in some private universities and engineering colleges in the State have reached the stage of closure, according to officials.

Employability

"Earlier, the engineering colleges functioning under the jurisdiction of the State's Higher Education Department were renowned at the national and international levels for providing high-quality technical education. It is worrying that only 17% of engineering graduates in the State are getting jobs," reads the order, emphasising the need for a review and remedial measures.

BMS College for Women hosts *Janapada Jaatre*

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

BMS College for Women, Basavanagudi, hosted *Janapada Jaatre 2026 - Janapada Aashayagala Hudukaata*, a celebration of Karnataka's rich folk traditions, on Wednesday.

Chief guest Prof. Krishne Gowda, noted Kannada scholar, highlighted the cultural depth of folk arts.

The event started with an innovative drone-banner unveiling, followed by a colourful procession through Basavanagudi and Gandhi Bazaar. Students performed State's traditional art forms.

Timings
BENGALURU

THURSDAY, FEB. 05		
RISE	06:45	SET 18:22
RISE	21:29	SET 09:03
FRIDAY, FEB. 06		
RISE	06:45	SET 18:22
RISE	22:17	SET 09:40
SATURDAY, FEB. 07		
RISE	06:45	SET 18:23
RISE	23:05	SET 10:16

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	30	20
Mysuru	32	18
Bengaluru	29	17

Bengaluru Today
30°C The weather will be dry. Day will be slight warm. Night will be cool and hazy.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
29°C Morning will be cool with mist and haze. Day will be slight warm. Night also will be cool.

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THE HINDU
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Priest booked on charge of rape

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

The Banakal police in Chikkamagaluru district have registered a case against a temple priest on the charges of raping a woman after allegedly assuring her that he would clear flaws in her horoscope. The complainant approached Krishna Rao, the accused, to seek guidance on her marriage prospects. Rao allegedly said her horoscope had some flaws and she needed to do some rituals. Citing the rituals, he allegedly raped her several times from November 2025.

Interns protest lack of stipends at BMCRI

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Students staging a protest on BMCRI campus in Bengaluru on Wednesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Students of B.Sc. Allied Health Sciences at Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute (BMCRI), who are currently doing the mandatory internship, held a strike on Wednesday protesting lack of internship stipends and lack of basic facilities.

"Repeated requests from usto the officials for stipends have been ignored. This is placing a significant financial burden on the students," said one of the students, who participated in the strike. Around 150 students participated in the protest.

After completing three years of academic study, Allied Health Sciences students are required to undergo one year of compulsory internship.

The revised guidelines of Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS), under which BMCRI comes, encourage a monthly stipend for the interns wherever possible. However, does not mandate it. "We perform full-time clinical duties, including night shifts. We actively contribute to patient care, often working for 8-12 hours. But all this goes unpaid. While the other students get hostel facilities, interns don't. This means we have to stay in private facilities, and the lack of stipend causes financial burden for us," they note.

'Inadequate facilities'

The protesting students further pointed out that their counterparts at other institutions, such as Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology, IGICH, Sanjay Gandhi Institute, and Jayadeva Institute, Allied Health Sciences, receive monthly allowances between ₹7,000 to ₹15,000.

Concerns around alleged lack of government-mandated provisions, including separate faculty, adequate infrastructure, and dedicated academic buildings for Allied Health Sciences courses, were flagged by the students.

Asima Banu, principal at BMCRI, noted that stipends to the Allied Health Sciences interns are a matter of government policy decision.

"There is some funding, and we are trying to get an Allied Health Sciences building for them. But the stipend is a government policy decision. No Allied Health Sciences interns in any of the medical colleges, be it BMC or MMC, are being given stipends currently. There is some movement in that direction; But currently we have no provision to give it at BMC alone," said Ms. Banu.

"A few super specialty standalone hospitals may be giving some amount, but they do it from their funds," Ms. Banu added.

Shopkeeper dies after being beaten up

The Hindu Bureau
HUBBALLI

A 48-year-old shopkeeper, Yallappa Durgappa Naik, who was assaulted by four men for demanding money for the cigarettes they bought, died on the way to hospital in Belagavi district on Tuesday night.

The Kakathi Police have registered a case. The accused have been identified as Prajwal Ramachandra Patil, Nikhil Mahesh Chougale, Vivek Rajendra Chougale, and Sridhar Ratan Patil from Kadoli village. The accused, who were reportedly in an inebriated state, were returning from a fair and stopped at Bodakenatti village for smoking cigarette.

They stopped Yallappa from closing his shop and bought cigarettes from him. When he asked for payment, they picked up quarrel with him and beat him up.

FICCI Ladies Organisation opens a 50-acre women-led industrial park in Gauribidanur

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

FICCI Ladies Organisation (FICCI FLO) has inaugurated a women-led industrial park at Gauriibidanur in Chickballapur district.

This 50-acre infrastructure, cleared by Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) and Karnataka Udyog Mitra (KUM), aims to lower long-standing entry barriers that have historically kept women, especially first-generation entrepreneurs, out of manufacturing and largescale enterprise, said the trade body.

Revathi Raju, head of the industrial park and former chairperson of FLO Bengaluru, said that the park represents a shift not just in infrastructure but in mindset. "For many women, owning an industry once felt like an impossible dream. What this park does is change that inner conversation. It tells women homemakers, professionals, first-time entrepreneurs that this space is meant for them too". Gauribidanur was deliberately chosen for its balance of connectivity with available infrastructure and long-term potential growth, while avoiding the overcrowding and restraints of Bengaluru's saturated industrial zones, she said.

Soumya Reddy, former MLA, said that empowering women is crucial for reshaping Karnataka and India's future. "Thanks to the State government's bold strides in mobility, finance, and welfare, countless women, especially in rural centres, are breaking barriers," she said.

M.V. Rajeev Gowda, former Rajya Sabha MP, said this initiative is expected to bring together women's workforce participation and the national vision of strengthening manufacturing and creating jobs.

Dodda Basavaraju, managing director, Karnataka Udyog Mitra, said, "This initiative shows what is possible when government and industry bodies work with trust and intent. By backing a women-led industrial park, we are not only supporting entrepreneurship but also creating livelihoods and sustainable economic activity in emerging regions through employment generation".

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

11th Anniversary
In fond memory of

Mrs.Beulah Thomas
19.10.1936 - 05.02.2015
"Your Loving Children, Grand Children, Great Grand Children & Alex Gama Family"

IN MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONES
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PUBLIC NOTICE

Public are hereby informed that my client proposes to purchase the below mentioned property free from Encumbrances from **SRI.SHIVASWAMY D.S,** S/o: Sri. Late. Sibirangaiah.D.N, Age:59 Years, R/at: Doddanaravangala Village, Bellavi Hobli, Tumkur Taluk. The person/s having any objection for the proposed purchase or having any Right/Interest or Title in the Schedule property may lodge their objection/s and or claim/s with the undersigned along with supporting documentary evidence within SEVEN DAYS from the date of this publication. The objection/s and or claim/s received thereafter shall not be binding on my client and my client will proceed to purchase the below mentioned Schedule property as if there are no claim/s and objection/s to complete the purchase.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing Sy No.137/2, measuring to an extent of 1 Acre 15 Guntas, situated at Doddanaravangala Village, Bellavi Hobli, Tumkur Taluk, Tumakur District and bounded on: **East by:** Property belongs to Smt. Puttamma W/o: Late. Chennigarayappa, **West by:** Property belongs to Sri. D.S Shivaswamy S/o: Late. Sibirangaiah and its Private Road joining to Sy No.137/2, **North by** : Sy No.133 Inam Properties for A.K. Colony & Sy No.137/1, **South by:** Sy No.137/3 belongs to Sri. Siddagangaiah S/o: Shivanna.

PRIVATE ROAD SCHEDULE :

1. All that piece and parcel of Northern portion 14 feet immovable property bearing Sy No.137/4 of the same village of the schedule property measuring 2 Guntas:

BOUNDARIES:

East by: Sy No.137/2 purchasing by the Purchaser, **West by** : Connecting to Sy No.137/6 and further continuous to Bellavi Mallsandra District Main Road, **North by** : Sy No.137/1 & 137/9 properties, **South by :** Remaining portion of Sy No.137/4.

2. All that piece and parcel of Northern portion 14 feet immovable property bearing Sy No.137/6 of the same village of the schedule property measuring 4 Guntas:

BOUNDARIES:

East by: Sy No.137/4 connecting road leads to the 137/2 road, **West by** : connecting to Bellavi Mallsandra District main Road, **North by**:Sy No.137/9 & 137/7 properties, **South by**: Remaining portion of Sy No.137/6.

B. RAVINDRA PRASAD, ADVOCATE
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Place: Bangalore
Date: 04-02-2026

Published by Nirmala Lakshman at No 19&21, Bhagwan Mahaveer Road, Bengaluru-560001 and Printed by C. Sridhar at Plot No. 13-D, Bommasandra-Jigani Link Road, KIADB Industrial Area, Bommasandra, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru-560099 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath Chandrasekar (Responsible for selection of news under the PRP Act).
ISSN 0971 - 751X

Advertisement

UTTAR PRADESH

NURTURING A FUTURE-READY GENERATION THROUGH EDUCATION

"An ideal society and a strong nation are built only on the basis of education. Culture has special importance in education. The path to success in life can begin from where it is actually education"

Yogi Adityanath
Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh

"Education is not only the foundation upon which our civilization has been built, but it is also the architect of humanity's future"

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

AN ERA OF SMART BASIC EDUCATION

- Through innovative initiatives like the School Chalo Abhiyan and the Sharda Program (School Attendance Every Day), an additional 40 lakh children have been enrolled, leading to a significant reduction in dropout rates
- Under the Sharda Program, 88,700 children were enrolled in council schools in 2025-26
- Under RTE, 22,040 children were studying in the year 2016-17, this number increased to more than 4.30 lakhs in 2024-25, whereas in 2025-26 the number is about 1.41 lakhs
- Under Operation Kayakalp, 19 essential infrastructure facilities are being upgraded in primary and upper primary schools
- Digital learning is being strengthened by ensuring:
  - Smart classes in 25,790 council schools
  - 880 Block Resource Centers (BRCs)
  - ICT labs in 5,817 schools
  - Distribution of over 2.61 lakh tablets for teachers
- All 746 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas were upgraded, providing free residential education up to Class 12 to girls from weaker sections
- The first Sainik School of Purvanchal is operational in Gorakhpur
- Atal Residential Schools have been launched in all 18 divisions
- Selected schools under the PM-SHRI scheme are being upgraded and developed as Green Schools
- 377 council schools from Pre-Primary to Class 8 are being upgraded as Chief Minister Abhyuday Composite Schools
- With a budgetary provision of around Rs 4,500 crore, 150 Chief Minister Model Composite Schools (two per district) are being established. These schools will provide education from Pre-Primary to Class 12, with a capacity of 1.500 students each

DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT

- Students are being provided mobile phones/tablets to connect them with digital education.
- 41.7 lakh students have been registered in the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC).
- Establishment of e-content studios, e-suvidha centers, smart classrooms, and e-libraries.
- Smart classrooms have been set up in all universities, government aided colleges, and most self financed institutions.
- Through the SMARTH/SAMARTH (ERP) Enterprise Resource Planning system, admissions, promotions, NOCs, and faculty related services have been fully digitized
- Libraries of government degree colleges are being strengthened by providing pre-loaded tablets enriched with academic material. thereby promoting digital learning.
- A paperless classroom has been launched as a pilot project with the objective of environmental conservation and digital empowerment

ADVANCEMENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- Since 2021-22, Uttar Pradesh has played a leading role in the implementation of NEP-2020
- Choice Based Credit System (CBCS), multidisciplinary education, state-exit options, and flexibility in subject selection have been introduced
- Promotion is being given to Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), value-based education, and research-oriented undergraduate programs
- A uniform academic calendar has been implemented across all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)
- Students are now provided the facility to complete a three-year degree program in two years through online credits

EMPOWERING SECONDARY EDUCATION

- A total of 34,074 teachers were selected in aided secondary schools
- Creation of 7,540 new teaching posts
- Teaching arrangements for the academic session have been made on a honorarium basis against vacant posts by engaging retired teachers. Requisitions have been sent for 780 Government, 3,222 Aided, and 419 Aided Sanskrit vacancies
- Selection of qualified teachers on the basis of written examination
- Appointment letters/postings have been issued to a total of 8,966 selected candidates including 6,808 selected assistant teachers, 1,939 lecturers and 219 principals by the Public Service Commission

CAREER-FOCUSED HIGHER EDUCATION

- CMAPS-HE: Paid internships for final-year students with a dedicated budget of ₹100 crore
- AEDP Yojana: One-year apprenticeship integrated into the academic programme
- Uttar Pradesh is a leader in developing the implementation roadmap for the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020
- The vision of One Division One State University is a reality
- UP Higher Education Promotion Policy- 2024 implemented to boost domestic and foreign investment in the education sector
- Construction of the NCC Training Academy initiated in Gorakhpur district
- Skill courses made mandatory, benefiting 23.9 lakh under-graduate students across 760+ skill-based trades
- Uttar Pradesh Education Service Selection Commission, Prayagraj constituted to ensure transparency in teacher recruitment

Houses pass resolution against VB-G RAM G Act

BJP and JD(S) oppose the resolution and stage walkout; the Opposition had ample opportunities to discuss the VB-G RAM G Act and defend it, but it failed to do so, Deputy Chief Minister says

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A resolution tabled by the Karnataka government in the legislature, opposing the repeal of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), 2005, and replacing it with the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Act, 2025, was passed on Wednesday, even as the BJP and the JD(S) members staged a walkout in both the Assembly and the Council.

The resolution will be sent to the President and the Government of India, sources said. The legislature session was then adjourned *sine die*.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar during the Assembly session in Bengaluru on Wednesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

BJP protests
Chief Minister Siddaramaiah tabled the resolution on Tuesday, with two days dedicated for its debate. However, the BJP and the JD(S) members launched an overnight dharna demanding the resignation of the Excise Minister over corruption allegations on Tuesday and continued it during the legislature session on Wednesday.

Amid non-stop sloganeering, the Speaker allowed a debate on the resolution. Before it was put to vote, Leader of Opposition R. Ashok opposed the resolution and the Opposition members staged a walkout.

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar said that despite having ample opportunities to discuss the VB-G RAM G Act, 2025, and defend it, the Opposition had failed to do so, even as the Chief Minister sought a vote on the resolution. It was passed with a voice vote.

'Economic terrorism'
Earlier in the day, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Priyank Kharge responded to the debate and argued that the new law was "anti-federal" for increasing the expenditure of the State governments without consultation, which he termed "economic terrorism". He pointed out that even NDA allies like Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu had expressed concern over increasing the State's share from 10% to 40%.

Responding to claims that under the new law, job seekers will get work for 125 days a year, instead of 100, he said the Budget allocation for the scheme was not in tune to the claim.

"To give 125 days of work to all those registered at a minimum wage of ₹375, we need ₹3.83 lakh crore and 60% of that is ₹2.3 lakh crore. But the Union Budget had only earmarked ₹95,000 crore this year."

Mr. Kharge termed the new law "anti-constitutional", as it centralises work in violation of the 73rd amendment to the Constitution. He said the Central government deciding what works will be taken up at the gram panchayat level was impractical. He also said the new scheme moves away from demand-based allocation of work to bringing it "within an economic framework". It allows for contractors to enter the scheme and pushes employment seekers to work under them, which was not the case earlier, he said.

Yatnal in defence
It was senior member Basanagouda R. Patil Yatnal, expelled from the BJP, who defended the VB-G Ram G Act, 2025, in the House on Wednesday. He said NREGS was not removed as claimed by the Congress, but was only reformed to plug several loopholes, including corruption and non availability of labourers during harvest season. He demanded that the Union government increase its share to 75%, from the current 60% under the new law. Senior Congress member B.R. Patil said while there was always scope for reform and improvement in the scheme, repealing NREGS amounted to "cutting the nose to treat a cold."

Leader of Opposition R. Ashok, speaking to reporters outside, said that the Congress government was hesitating to provide its 40% share owing to a lack of funds. He claimed that extensive discussions were held with all State governments and the Congress which did not oppose it then was doing so now for political reasons.

Ravi suspended from Council for a day

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Senior BJP member and former Minister C.T. Ravi on Wednesday was suspended from the Legislative Council for his remarks on the floor of the House on Tuesday. The suspension came in the absence of the member, who despite being called by the Chair refused to turn up.

The decision was announced by Chairman Basavaraj Horatti late on Wednesday night, before the House was adjourned *sine die,* based on a petition by the Congress, which also moved a resolution in the House seeking the suspension of Mr. Ravi. The suspension will be in place only for Wednesday, the last day of the joint legislature session.

Mr. Ravi, on Tuesday, during a heated exchange with Congress members had questioned whether any "Indian tongue" could speak against the Prime Minister and added another remark that was later expunged. His remark had been targeted against the Congress member and Chief Minister's Political Secretary Naseer Ahmed, who on Monday had made an uncharitable remark against Mr. Modi. Mr. Ahmed had offered regret for his remark on Tuesday. While attempts had been made to convince Mr. Ravi to apologise about his remark too, he had refused to do so.

C.T. Ravi

Suspension came in the absence of the member, who despite being called by the Chair didn't turn up

Many meetings
In a bid to have a smooth conduct of the Legislative Council proceeding, which was washed out on Tuesday, multiple rounds of meetings were held on Wednesday between the Congress and BJP leaders to resolve the logjam.

The Congress petitioned the Chairman seeking Mr. Ravi's suspension from the House. Later, the House Leader N.S. Boseraju also moved a resolution in the House seeking suspension of the BJP legislator, who remained absent in the afternoon. The resolution said that since many members were unhappy with Mr. Ravi, he should be suspended.

Though Congress members pressed for his suspension, Mr. Horatti said, "He is not here. I will speak to him and announce his decision."

Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister H.K. Patil agreed to the ruling and suggested that he should be given 15 minutes to appear in the House and said that the member knew about the notice. After about 20 minutes, when the Congress members again demanded action, Mr. Horatti asked Chief Whip N. Ravikumar to summon Mr. Ravi to the House.

Direction of the House
When the Chief Whip returned to inform that Mr. Ravi would not be able to come immediately and he could come by 8.30 p.m., Mr. Horatti said, "Since he is available on phone, it is your responsibility to ensure he is present."

When Mr. Ravikumar expressed helplessness to bring him earlier because he was in a pre-scheduled event, the Chairman told him that it was the direction of the House to be present by 8 p.m.

Eventually, when Mr. Ravi did not turn up, the Chairman announced the suspension. "Despite three to four meetings held to address the issue, he is not present. He has not honoured by word. He will be suspended for today (Wednesday)."

Horatti slams Naseer
Mr. Horatti took exception to Mr. Ahmed's repeated intervention to seek suspension of Mr. Ravi. "You are the reason (for disorder in House). You cross talk a lot," he said.

A little later, a visibly upset Mr. Horatti took exception over Mr. Ahmed gesturing about match fixing. "Ask him to mind what he is doing," Mr. Horatti told House Leader N.S. Boseraju. In response, Mr. Ahmed said he was a senior member of the House and knew how to respect the Chair.

Pending Anugraha compensation for cattle deaths raised

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Congress member Ivan D'Souza on Wednesday urged the State government to expedite the release of compensation under the Anugraha scheme to dairy farmers in the coastal districts, citing delays in payments despite livestock deaths due to disease.

Raising the issue in the Legislative Council, Mr. D'Souza said in Dakshina Kannada, 373 cattle deaths were reported last year due to disease, of which compensation for 160 animals was still pending. In Udupi district, compensation had not been released for 122 of the 338 cattle that had died.

The Anugraha scheme was introduced by the State government to provide relief to farmers when livestock die due to disease or accidents. Under the scheme, compensation of ₹15,000 is provided for the death of cows, buffaloes and bullocks, while ₹7,500 is paid for the death of sheep and goats.

Mr. D'Souza pointed out that the compensation amount was inadequate, especially when the market value of a cow ranged between ₹30,000 and ₹35,000.

Recalling that the Anugraha scheme was launched in 2013, Mr. D'Souza said the compensation amount was enhanced from ₹10,000 to ₹15,000 in the last Budget.

When Rayaraddi sang a Dev Anand classic

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Congress member Basavaraj Rayaraddi surprised everyone in the Assembly on Wednesday by singing a stanza of a song from the Hindi movie *Hare Rama Hare Krishna*.

"With the permission of the House, I want to sing a Hindi film song to send a message to the BJP members who are using the name of Ram," Mr. Rayaraddi said and sang "*Dekho Ye Diwaano, Tum Ye Kaam Na Karo. Ram Ka Naam Badnaam Na Karo.* This is the original song. But I have modified it as *Dekho Ye BJP Ke Diwaano, Tum Ye Kaam Na Karo. Raam Ka Naam Badnaam Na Karo*".

Opposition continues protest over 'corruption' in Excise Dept. and seeks Minister's resignation

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Refusing to withdraw its night-long dharna, the BJP members continued their protest in the Assembly on the last day of the session on Wednesday seeking resignation of Excise Minister R.B. Thimmapur over alleged bribery scandal in his department.

As soon as the House met on Wednesday morning, the BJP and the JD(S) members trouped into the well of the House and resumed their dharna. They raised slogans against the Minister and the government.

Leader of the Opposition R. Ashok expressed disappointment over the Minister not tendering his resignation despite "providing evidence" in the form of an audio recording of a conversation between the client and the Excise official on alleged bribery; and a complaint being filed before the Lokayukta by the affected person.

BJP leaders B.Y. Vijayendra, R. Ashok, and others staging an overnight protest in Bengaluru on Tuesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"To uphold morality and ensure accountability, the Minister should immediately resign and allow an impartial probe," he argued.

Training his guns on Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, he said, "If the Chief Minister fails to ask the Minister to quit, then people of the State will start wondering if he too has a share in the corruption scandal."

He alleged that the money from the Excise Department had been sent for maintaining the Congress' election expenses in other States. "In fact Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar is in charge of Assam and Energy Minister K.J. George is in charge of Kerala for the Congress," he said, alleging that "Karnataka has become not ATM, but RBI for the Congress high command."

Taking to X later, Mr. Ashok said, "We have provided clear evidence of corruption in the Excise scandal. But the Chief Minister is defending him, which suggests even the Chief Minister has a share in the corruption. Our struggle will not end till the Minister resigns."

Yatnal alleges bias in State BJP's fight against corruption

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Expelled BJP member Basanagouda R. Patil Yatnal on Wednesday embarrassed the BJP in the Assembly by again targeting its State leadership and accusing it of being biased in taking up the fight against alleged corruption by Ministers.

Though Mr. Yatnal upheld the stand of the BJP by supporting the VB-G RAM G Act and hailing Prime Minister Narendra Modi for bringing about the legislation, he alleged bias in the State BJP's fight against alleged corruption by Ministers.

Referring to the BJP's protest seeking resignation of Excise Minister R.B. Thimmapur over alleged corruption in his department, he maintained that the party should have shown a similar approach with respect to alleged corruption by other Ministers.

"Permission was denied by the party leadership for taking out a padayatra from Ballari against the misuse of funds meant for the Maharshi Valmiki ST Development Corporation. Similarly several other Ministers are facing corruption allegations. The party should not have any bias, especially caste-based bias, while taking up fight against corruption.," he said.

Congress leader Hariprasad dares BJP to push Centre to declare Pakistan enemy nation

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Senior Congress leader B.K. Hariprasad on Wednesday challenged the BJP to press the Centre to officially declare Pakistan an enemy nation, arguing that such a decision could be taken only through India's foreign policy framework and not through political rhetoric.

Speaking during a discussion in the Legislative Council on the use of objectionable language, Mr. Hariprasad said that whether a country was an enemy nation could not be decided by individuals or political parties. "This country has a foreign policy. If Pakistan is an enemy nation, the Centre should declare it as such," he said.

Diplomatic ties
He pointed out that diplomatic ties with Pakistan continued, including the presence of embassies, and questioned how Pakistan could be labelled an "enemy nation" without severing such relations.

Responding to BJP member K.S. Naveen, who recalled Mr. Hariprasad's earlier remarks describing Pakistan as a neighbouring country, he said India need not maintain any relationship with Pakistan if foreign policy so decided.

Mr. Hariprasad also said that China posed a greater threat to India, noting that the Union External Affairs Minister had acknowledged Chinese occupation of Indian territory.

B.K. Hariprasad speaking during a discussion in the Legislative Council on the use of objectionable language. FILE PHOTO

Sporting engagement
Referring to the killing of 26 civilians in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, he said the Centre could have declared Pakistan an enemy nation then. However, he criticised the BJP for allowing sporting engagements, pointing out that Indian teams played cricket matches with Pakistan in Dubai even after the incident.

Rejecting accusations of a lack of patriotism, Mr. Hariprasad said the Congress had never raised slogans in favour of Pakistan or glorified its leaders.

He recalled former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's position that dialogue with Pakistan would not resume until terrorism ended.

Invited for swearing in
Mr. Hariprasad also pointed out that in 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had invited Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to his swearing-in ceremony, and challenged BJP leaders to reflect on their claims of nationalism, referring to the India Gate memorial bearing the names of martyrs from all communities.

The remarks led to sharp exchanges between members of the two parties in the House.

Chaos in Assembly over Shivalinge Gowda's remarks

K.M. Shivalinge Gowda speaking during the Assembly session on Wednesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Alleged unparliamentary words exchanged between Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) members and Congress member K.M. Shivalinge Gowda led to chaos in the Assembly on Wednesday. The Speaker ordered for the words to be expunged.

'Was provoked'
While Mr. Gowda alleged he was provoked because the BJP members called him a "thief", it was not part of the records as the members were in the well of the House continuing their overnight dharna demanding the resignation of Excise Minister R.B. Thimmapur.

House adjourned
The House had to be adjourned for a few minutes, for the Speaker to try to broker peace between the two sides.

Though Speaker U.T. Khader asked both sides to express regret, neither of them did so.

Leader of Opposition R. Ashok said that this was a bad precedent set in the Assembly. BJP member V. Sunil Kumar read out past instances of unparliamentary words used by Mr. Gowda expunged from records, arguing he was prone to use such language.

Kerala passes resolution over 'neglect' in Budget

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

In a resolution passed on Wednesday, the Kerala Assembly slammed the Centre for its "continuing neglect of the State" a situation which, it said, was reflected ever more strongly in the Union Budget.

The resolution sought the Centre's attention to the State's demands, including approval for an All India Institute of Medical Sciences and a high-speed rail corridor that were "ignored" in the Budget.

The resolution presented by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan strongly urged the Centre to "correct its approach to Kerala and ensure justice to the State, respecting the spirit of cooperative federalism and the need for the balanced development of the nation."

Sabarimala issue

The House adopted the resolution in the absence of the Congress-led Opposition UDF, which had boycotted the Assembly proceedings earlier in the morning over the Sabarimala gold theft issue. The UDF walked out during Question Hour. The session was disrupted as the Opposition and ruling-front MLAs hurled accusations at each other over the issue.

Speaking to the media outside the Assembly, Leader of the Opposition V.D. Satheesan said the government had not informed the Opposition about the resolution.

12 accused of disrobing woman get 5 years' RI

She was assaulted before being tied to a pole and partially stripped after her son eloped with a girl

The Hindu Bureau
HUBBALLI

Considering the seriousness of the offence, the case was transferred to the Criminal Investigation Department.

All the 12 accused persons chargesheeted for their involvement in disrobing and assaulting a 42-year-old woman belonging to a Scheduled Tribe community have been found guilty by the court, which has sentenced them to five-year rigorous imprisonment.

The Belagavi Additional 10th District and Sessions Court announced the verdict on Wednesday. Delivering the verdict, Judge H.S. Manjunath convicted all the 12 accused under Section 235 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (corresponding to Section 258 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita).

The convicted persons are Basappa Naika (45), Raju Naika (52), Kempanna (52), Parvathi Basappa Naika (37), Yeallva Rudrappa Naika (67), Lakkappa Naika (26), Gangavva Basappa Walikar (62), Sangeetha Sadashiva Hegganaika (35), Santosh Naika 921), Sobha Raju Naika (49), Lakkavva Yellappa Naika (42), Shivappa Vannuri (53), all residents of Hosavantamuri village.

The incident had occurred on December 11, 2023, in Vantamuri village of Belagavi district. The woman was assaulted before being tied to a pole and partially stripped after her son eloped with a girl he was in love with. The girl's engagement was scheduled on December 11. But she eloped with a boy from the same village on the night of December 10. The boy and girl belong to the same community.

When relatives realised that the girl had disappeared, they rushed to the boy's house, ransacked it and beat up his mother. She was tied to a pole in front of her house and partially stripped. One of the villagers informed the police who rushed to the village and rescued the woman.

Subsequently the Kakathi Station Police had registered an FIR (Cr. No. 260/2023, dated 11/12/2023) based on the complaint lodged by the victim.

They were booked for offences punishable under various Sections of the Indian Penal Code, and Section 2(A) of the Prevention of Destruction and Loss of Property Act, 1981.

Considering the seriousness of the offence, the case was transferred to the CID.

The High Court of Karnataka had initiated suo motu proceedings and passed orders directing the competent court to complete the trial expeditiously within an outer limit of one year. After the trial commenced in the district court, 45 witnesses were examined.

Laddu row: CBI for action against TTD officials

Press Trust of India
AMARAVATI

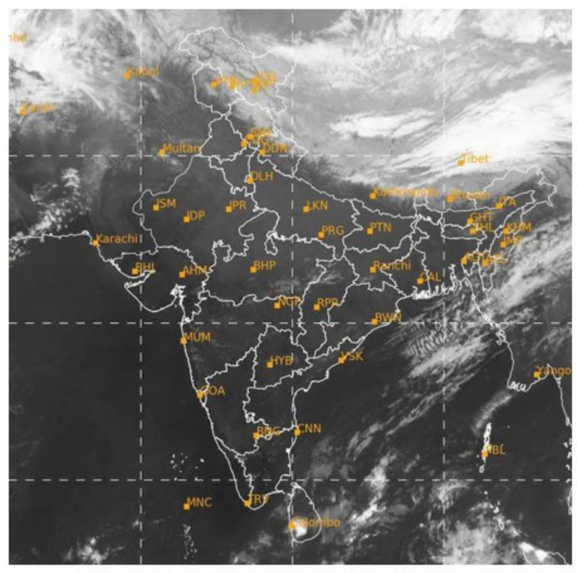
The CBI has asked the Andhra Pradesh government to take suitable action against senior TTD officers, including former members, for alleged "deliberate omissions and failures" in tender conditions, leading to the alleged supply of adulterated ghee to make the famous Tirupati laddu.

The SIT accused TTD officials O. Balaji, FA & CAO; A.V. Dharma Reddy, former additional executive officer; and Anil Kumar Singhal, former executive officer; of approving tender conditions without "application of mind".

Finance Minister P. Keshav said the Andhra Pradesh Cabinet has decided to treat the people mentioned in the CBI-led SIT letter as 'guilty' in the case.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.15 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Dense fog likely at isolated places over Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Assam, Meghalaya and west Madhya Pradesh. Ground frost likely at isolated places over Uttarakhand. Squally wind likely to prevail over Gulf of Mannar, adjoining Comorin area

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	28.8	16.4	Kozhikode	—	34.4	25.0
Ahmedabad	—	29.7	18.7	Kurnool	—	32.8	19.2
Aizawl	—	29.7	15.3	Lucknow	7	22.7	10.9
Allahabad	0.5	22.8	12.2	Madurai	—	33.4	21.7
Bengaluru	—	29.2	15.5	Mangaluru	—	33.9	22.8
Bhopal	—	22.8	14.0	Mumbai	—	35.0	19.6
Bhubaneswar	—	29.6	15.2	Mysuru	—	30.6	17.0
Chandigarh	—	22.1	7.4	New Delhi	—	22.9	8.2
Chennai	—	31.2	21.9	Patna	—	24.8	14.4
Coimbatore	—	32.0	19.4	Port Blair	—	30.5	25.9
Dehradun	—	24.0	8.8	Puducherry	—	29.8	20.4
Gangtok	—	17.2	8.4	Pune	—	32.0	19.4
Goa	—	35.4	21.0	Raipur	—	31.2	18.3
Guwahati	—	28.6	13.5	Ranchi	—	26.6	13.0
Hubballi	—	32.0	17.0	Shillong	—	18.9	7.5
Hyderabad	—	28.8	19.2	Shimla	—	17.2	6.4
Imphal	—	26.1	11.4	Srinagar	2	11.1	3.0
Jaipur	—	25.1	11.2	Thiruvananthapuram	—	34.1	23.7
Kochi	—	30.6	24.8	Tiruchi	—	31.3	20.6
Kohima	—	18.0	8.2	Vijayawada	—	30.0	21.2
Kolkata	—	27.7	17.2	Visakhapatnam	—	29.7	21.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.70	104	23	... 100	...107	
Bengaluru	...5	..18	37	... 108	...144	
Chennai	...9	..13	54	 62	90	
Delhi	.15	215	65	... 377	...354	
Hyderabad	...4	..11	74	... 105	...126	
Kolkata	...9	..98	55	... 230	...135	
Lucknow	...6	..55	61	 97	...243	
Mumbai	.13	..88	20	... 166	...148	
Pune	..—	..51	32	... 263	...205	
Visakhapatnam	...8	..34	23	... 158	...135	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Ballabgarh, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 370 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir recorded a healthy AQI score of 22

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

SIR exercise is turning voters to 'living dead': Kamal

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Actor-turned-MP and president of Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM) Kamal Haasan, in his maiden speech in the Rajya Sabha, on Wednesday raised concerns over the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

He said the SIR could delete one crore voters from the list in Tamil Nadu and expressed support for West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

Citing the SIR in Bihar, he said the State had become a land of "many living dead", and added this disease should not be allowed to spread across the country.

"Election Commission is surely facilitating the spread of this disease," he said.

"My imminent concern is the forthcoming elections...We want to cast a vote, and the Election Commission is checking our right to vote. They are checking the spellings and

Kamal Haasan

addresses, and that too erroneously. We just want to cast our vote," he said.

"We fear that there could soon be nearly one crore living dead on paper in Tamil Nadu," he added and demanded that the "living dead be resurrected".

"If you refuse to help us with this redirection, you achieve nothing but half-baked, half-finished illegal electoral conquest," Mr. Haasan said.

"This democratic juggernaut will roll over differences, but should never roll over people. We will not allow it. Nobody is immortal. No government can or should aim for permanency," Mr. Haasan said while asking all to "grow up along with a growing progressive democracy".

Sitharaman responds

Later in the day, referring to a statement by Mr. Hassan in the Rajya Sabha that she had allegedly used derogatory words about the Tamil language in March 2025, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman clarified on X that she had only quoted Periyar E.V. Ramasamy Naicker and that it was not her views.

INBRIEF

Will respond firmly if 'jungle raj' continues in A.P.: Jagan

Alleging a breakdown of law and order in Andhra Pradesh, YSRCP president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Wednesday blamed the Chandrababu Naidu-led government for it, warning that his party would respond firmly if the 'jungle raj' continued in the State. Addressing the media after meeting the family of YSRCP leader Ambati Rambabu, who was arrested for his alleged derogatory remarks against the Chief Minister, Mr. Jagan alleged that the government was trying to divert attention after 'lab reports contradicted its claims in the Tirupati laddu adulteration case'.

Telangana demotes DSP rank officer in phone-tapping case

The Telangana government has issued orders demoting a former officer with Special Intelligence Branch (SIB) in connection with the illegal phone tapping case, cancelling the accelerated promotion granted to him earlier and reverting him to a lower rank. The officer, Dugyala Praneeth Rao, was serving as a Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) and has now been demoted to the rank of Circle Inspector. The 2007 batch officer, was earlier suspended following his arrest in the case in 2024. With the cancellation of his accelerated promotion, he will continue in service as an Inspector. He served in the SIB during the previous government and faced allegations of illegally tapping the phones of political leaders. The SIT probing the case has also questioned former chief of Special Investigation Bureau (SIB), T. Prabhakar Rao.

Elephant killed

A juvenile elephant was mowed down by Yesvantpur-Kannur Express at Vattappara, near Walayar in Kerala on Wednesday. It died instantly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public are hereby informed that my Client **Mr. SYED HASHIM**, Son of Mr. Syed Hyder, Residing at: Flat No.002, Ground Floor, No.1/2, Spencer Road, Fraser Town, Bangalore-560 005 is the full and absolute owner of the property described in the Schedule hereunder and he having acquired the same from his wife Mrs. Naseema Hashim in terms of a Gift Deed dated 03/11/2014 registered as Document No.3657/2014-15 in Book-I and stored in CD.No.HLSD108 in the Office of the Sub-Registrar, Ulsoor, Bangalore. My client represents that the Schedule Property was originally purchased by Mr. Abdul Hameed Husain Dawood from my vendor Mr. N.Mahadevan and his legal heirs in terms of a Sale Deed dated 13/12/1994 registered as Document No.3023/1994-95 in Book-I, Volume-3654 at pages 66 to 75 in the Office of the Sub-Registrar, Shivajinagar, Bangalore and Mr. Abdul Hameed Husain Dawood later sold the Schedule Property in favour of Mr.M.Balachandran in terms of a Sale Deed dated 10/07/2003 registered as Document No.1774/2003-04 in Book-I and stored in CD No.46 in the Office of the Sub-Registrar, Shivajinagar, Bangalore and Mr. M.Balachandran sold the same in favour of Mrs.Naseema Hashim in terms of a Sale Deed dated 10/06/2005 registered as Document No. 1153/2005-06 in Book-I and stored in CD No.SHVD40 in the Office of the Senior Sub-Registrar, Shivajinagar, Bangalore. The Sale Deed dated 13/12/1994 under which Mr. Abdul Hameed Husain Dawood had purchased the Schedule Property is either lost in transit or mislaid. Any person/s finding the Original Sale Deed dated 13/12/1994 may deliver the same to the undersigned forthwith. My client has lodged a Complaint before Frazer Town Police Station 03/02/2026 regarding loss of title deed. Other than my Client if any person/s were to deal with the said original title deed referred to above, the same will not be binding on my Client and such person/s will not derive any right, title to or interest and such transaction will be void-abinitio.

: SCHEDULE :

Flat No. T-3 in Third Floor of the building known as 'HALL MARK APARTMENT' measuring 1250 Sq. Feet of super built up area, situated at Wheeler Road, Fraser Town, Civil Station, Bangalore, and presently bearing E-Khatha No. 20/1/16, EPID No.2587647921 of Wheeler Road, Bangalore.

Mr. K. P. RUPESH KUMAR,
M/s. LAW CORP
Advocates & Consultants,
No.G3, Ground Floor, Mohan Towers,
No. 98/2-27, Residency Road,
Bangalore / K.G.F. (M) 9886761765
BANGALORE, Date : 05.02.2026

Tamil Nadu Power Generation Corporation Ltd
Notice Inviting Tenders (E-Tendering Process)

Specification No.	Tender Inviting Authority	Name of the Work
145	SE / P&A / MTPS	Supply Erection Testing and Commissioning of New Inergen IG 541 fire suppression system Unit - I

For details of works / Procurement / Due date of submission / Opening, viewing and downloading of e-tenders, please visit websites: **www.tnpdcl.org, www.tenders.tn.gov.in, www.tntenders.gov.in**
DIPR/747/Tender/2026

Legal Metrology Department
Office of the Controller of Legal Metrology "Mapana Soudha"
4th Floor, No.1, Ali Asker Road, P.B.No.175, Bengaluru.

No: KaMAE/Ba.Moo.Se/CR-22/2025-26 Date: 03.02.2026

E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

Regarding availing services for the vacancies available at State Government Legal Metrology Department, Bangalore City and District Head Quarter/Taluk Offices for Data Entry Assistant, (Computer Operator), Vehicle Drivers, Crane Lorry Drivers, Crane Lorry Assistants and Group 'D' posts (from external source) through an Outsourcing Agency.

E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Two Cover System)

Calendar of Events: Bidding Schedule: 1) Free download of tender form from e-Portal website: **04.02.2026.** 2) Pre-bid meeting: **13.02.2026 at 12.00 noon.** 3) Last date for submission of Tender: **21.02.2026 upto 5.30 p.m.** 4) Opening of Technical Bid: **24.02.2026 at 11.00 a.m.** 5) Opening of Financial Bid: **27.02.2026 at 11.00 a.m.** 6) EMD Amount: **Rs.1,00,000/-.** 8) Place of opening of bids: Office of the Controller of Legal Metrology, Mapana Soudha, 4th Floor, No.1, Ali Asker Road, Bengaluru-560 052. Telephone: 080-22253500.

Sd/-
Controller,
Legal Metrology Department

DIPR/CP/5410/MAA/25-26

KARNATAKA STATE ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION
Traffic-Commercial (AWATAR) Section Ground Floor, K.H. Road, Shanthinagara, Bengaluru-560 027.

No.KSRTC/TRF/AWATAR/03/2025-26 Date:04-02-2026.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Tender is invited through e-portal for the Selection of "Payment Gateway Service Provider (PGSP) for e-ticketing, POS and Kiosk" for KSRTC.

1. Calendar of events:

Description	Date	Time
Last date for submission of queries	17.02.2026	17:00 hours
Pre-Bid meeting	18.02.2026	11:00 hours
Last date of Submission of Bids	02.03.2026	17:00 hours
Opening of Technical Bid	04.03.2026	11:00 hours
Opening of Financial Bid	11.03.2026	11:00 hours

2. The Financial Bids of the Bidders, those who have qualified in Technical Bid will only be opened.
3. The RFP Documents along with Terms & Conditions, Eligibility Criteria and other Technical detail can be downloaded from the e-portal website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**
4. Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) **Rs.5,00,000/-** : Bidder has to pay **Rs.500/-** through e-portal by e-payment and **Rs.4,99,500/-** through DD in favour of CAO-FA, KSRTC, Bengaluru-560027.
5. KSRTC reserves the right to accept or reject tender without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/-Chief Traffic Manager (Com), Central Offices, Shanthinagara, Bengaluru-27

DIPR/DD-C.P/5414/KSMCA/2025-26

Tamil Nadu Power Distribution Corporation Ltd.
Notice Inviting Tenders (E-Tendering Process)

Specification No.	Tender Inviting Authority	Name of the Work
16	SE / CDC-I	Hashthinapuram SS 33 and 11 KV Cable laying work
21	SE / CDC-I	Vengaivasal SS 33 and 11 KV Cable laying work with 2 nos OD Bay extn

For details of works / Procurement / Due date of submission / Opening, viewing and downloading of e-tenders, please visit the websites **www.tnpdcl.org, www.tenders.tn.gov.in, www.tntenders.gov.in**
DIPR/756/Tender/2026

GREATER CHENNAI CORPORATION
IT CELL I.T.C.C.NO.C1 /3780/2025

E - TENDER NOTICE

E-Tender are invited for the following work by Senior System Manager in Two Cover System as per details furnished below

1 To purchase toners for canon model printers available at various locations of Greater Chennai Corporation.
2. To purchase toners for Hp/Samsung model printers available at various locations of Greater Chennai Corporation.
3. Providing Facility Management Services and Annual Maintenance Contract for Computer Hardware and Software in Ripon Building, 3 Regional Offices, 45 Unit Offices. 15 Zonal Offices, Substations. Hospitals, Health Post and other locations within the limits of Greater Chennai Corporation for a period of one year.

Value of work	E.M.D Amount
1. Rs.1,72,96,747/- 2. Rs.4,64,74,198/- 3. Rs.4,73,04,008/-	1. Rs.1,72,967/- 2.Rs.4,64,742/- 3.Rs.4,73,040/-

Bid document will be available in web site https://tntenders.gov.in
Last date and time to submit the filled in tender document : 19.02.2026 upto 02.00 P.M.
Tender opening date and time : 19.02.2026 at 03.00 P.M
DIPR / 735 / Tender / 2026
Senior System Manager

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Office of the Deputy General Manager-1, BSWML, 1st Floor, BBMP Building, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru-560 052.

No. DGM-1/(BSWML)/PR/1066/25-26 Date: 04.02.2026

CORRIGENDUM- 3

Sub: Updation of Calendar of Events for Tender Notification.
Ref: This office Tender Notification No: DGM-1/BSWML/TEND/16/2025- 26, Date: 30.12.2025.
As per the above subject and reference, the calendar of events for the above tender notification is extended due to technical reason. The Change in the Calendar of Events is as shown in below table.

Time Schedule /Calendar of Events:

Sl. No		As per tender notification Corrigendum 1&2	Updated dates please read as
1	Last Date of Receipt of Tender	04.02.2026 before 16:00 hrs.	09.02.2026 before 16:00 hrs.
2	Opening of Technical Bid	05.02.2026 after 16:30 hrs.	10.02.2026 after 16:30 hrs.

For Further details visit GOK kppp portal Website **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-1, BSWML

DIPR/CP/5407/Shirdi Sai/2025-26

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
No.2, 2/1 and 2/3, Kalidasa Marg, 1st Main Road, Gandhinagar
Bengaluru - 560 009. Phone No. 080-22265383, website: www.kiadb.in

IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-79/3488/2025-26 Date: 04.02.2026

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER
(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Item rate Tender under two cover bid system is invited as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors who have got adequate financial resources, suitable construction equipments, technical man power & sufficient past experience for the work as per the schedule given below:

Name of the Work : Providing Basic Electrical Infrastructure & LED Street light facilities at Doothanur Kaval Industrial Area, Shanthigrama Hobli, Hassan Taluk & District.

The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **20.02.2026** upto **4.00 pm.**

Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/-
Chief Engineer-1, KIADB Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/5433/Zen/2025-26

Joining hands

The BJP manages internal unity in Manipur; the State still awaits it

Nearly a year after former Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh resigned on February 9, 2025, leading to President's Rule, President Droupadi Murmu revoked the order on Wednesday to facilitate the return of a popular government – Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Yumnam Khemchand Singh was sworn in as the 13th Chief Minister. The two Deputy Chief Ministers are Nemcha Kipgen, from the Kuki-Zo community, and Losii Dikho of the BJP's ally, the Naga People's Front. While these moves were taken to avoid extending President's Rule beyond one year, which would have required moving a Constitution Amendment Bill in Parliament, they also allow the ruling BJP to provide a semblance of democratic governance to help it regain public support during the final year of the Assembly's tenure. As seen in the general election, the disastrous second tenure of N. Biren Singh had led to discontent in the hills and valley of Manipur, reflected in the victory of Opposition candidates. Subsequently, as sporadic violence spread across even relatively peaceful areas, a coalition of internal critics in the BJP, which included Mr. Khemchand Singh, successfully lobbied for a change in leadership. That Mr. Biren Singh was present when Mr. Khemchand Singh was nominated by the BJP leadership to the posts of Legislature Party leader and Chief Minister suggests party consensus. Mr. Khemchand Singh had also signalled his intent in working towards reconciliation between the Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities by visiting a Kuki-Zo relief camp in the Naga-dominated Ukhrul district last year.

President's Rule was also intended to dismantle the impunity of armed radical groups and facilitate the safe return of the displaced. While security forces had managed to recover a significant portion of looted weapons and tamp down the fervour of radical groups, the human cost of the ethnic strife still remains unaddressed. Only 9,000 of the estimated 60,000 displaced persons have returned home, reflecting the enduring trust deficit. Dastardly acts, such as the execution of a Meitei man in the Tuibong area of Churachandpur, in January, while visiting his Kuki-Zo wife, underscore the urgent need to defang radical groups that continue to hold sway. The BJP has successfully leveraged political survival as a glue for its leaders. However, engineering a similar detente between the communities remains a daunting task. With Kuki-Zo groups continuing to demand an untenable "separate administration" which will lead to further discord beyond just the two communities, the new government must move beyond token concessions such as accommodating different community representatives in leadership positions. True stability will require an inclusive dialogue that engages all political and civil society stakeholders to rebuild the foundation of trust.

Generations apart

Despite being separated by 16 years, Djokovic fought as an equal with Alcaraz

Ever since Carlos Alcaraz won his maiden Grand Slam title at the 2022 US Open and scaled the pinnacle of ATP rankings as a tender 19-year-old, he was said to be on a fast lane to success. On Sunday, with his first Australian Open singles crown and seventh Major overall, the Spaniard proved that those predictions were not ill-founded. The four-set triumph over the legendary Novak Djokovic drew Alcaraz level with greats such as John McEnroe and Mats Wilander in the all-time Slam tally. At 22 years, eight months and 28 days, Alcaraz is also the youngest to complete the career Grand Slam (acquiring all four Majors at least once), surpassing 22-time Slam winner Rafael Nadal's record of 24 years, three months and 10 days. Melbourne had long been Alcaraz's Achilles heel. He had not gone past the quarterfinals in four prior attempts, and this time, he had arrived Down Under without his long-term coach Juan Carlos Ferrero, from whom he recently split. But the World No.1 thrived, often under pressure, not just in the final where he fended off a resurgent Djokovic aiming for his 25th Major, but also in the semifinals where he battled from the brink – both tennis-wise and health-wise – to outlast Germany's Alexander Zverev in a five-hour, 27-minute humdinger.

The fortnight also served as a timely reminder of Djokovic's enduring genius. The rousing four-hour, nine-minute semifinal victory over World No.2 and two-time defending champion Jannik Sinner – his first over the Italian in six attempts – showed that even at the grand old tennis age of 38, the Serb is among the very best. He may have benefitted from a walkover in the fourth round and a retirement in the quarterfinals, but what shone were his technical mastery and the ability to hit peak level when needed. Djokovic is now up to No. 3, and such is his recent record – four semifinals and a final in the last five Majors – that any talk of retirement appears incongruous. However, it will be in the best interest of men's tennis if a contemporary star can be unearthed to challenge the Alcaraz-Sinner duopoly than just depending on a seemingly timeless patriarch. The women's game does not suffer from such lacuna as Elena Rybakina captured her second Slam title – after Wimbledon 2022 – with a stunning three-set defeat of World No. 1 and four-time Major winner Aryna Sabalenka. The 26-year-old Kazakh is now ranked No. 3, and the fact that she beat No. 2 Iga Swiatek – who was on her own mission to achieve a career Slam – and No. 6 Jessica Pegula en route will halo her achievement.

The Budget and the imperative of fiscal consolidation

C. Rangarajan

is Chairman, Madras School of Economics, and a former Governor of the Reserve Bank of India

D.K. Srivastava

is Member, Advisory Council to the Sixteenth Finance Commission, and a former Director of the Madras School of Economics

The Budget pinpoints the critical areas where the government needs to focus on, but sustained growth needs monetary and fiscal stability

While presenting the Union Budget 2026-27, a considerable part of the Finance Minister's Budget speech dealt with the expenditure programmes that will be launched to enable India to become developed by 2047. The emphasis on the advanced technology sectors such as Artificial Intelligence, biopharma, semiconductor and critical minerals among others, is well taken. The concern with these expenditure programmes is on how well they are going to be implemented and the pace at which they will enable the goal of Viksit Bharat to be achieved.

Expenditure priorities, revenue prospects

In order to provide fiscal space for these changing priorities, the Government of India has been successfully undertaking a restructuring, particularly of its revenue expenditures. For more than a decade, the share of revenue expenditure to total expenditure has been going down, from 88% in 2014-15 to about 77% in 2026-27 (BE), that is a fall of 11% points. Within this, the fall in central subsidies was 7% points of total expenditure. Correspondingly, the share of capital expenditure in total expenditure has increased.

The Centre's emphasis on capital expenditure has played an important role in supporting GDP growth. As a percentage of GDP, the Centre's capital expenditure, in the post-COVID-19 years, has been at a high level. However, its annual growth rate has fallen over time. Thus, from a recent peak growth of 28.3% in 2023-24, it fell to 10.8% in 2024-25 and to 4.2% in 2025-26 (RE). It is budgeted to increase now to 11.5% in 2026-27 (BE), which is only marginally higher than the assumed nominal GDP growth of 10.0%. Thus, it will almost remain static at 3.1% of GDP in 2025-26 (RE) and 2026-27 (BE). It may be noted that the budgeted capital expenditure growth in 2025-26 was 10.1%, but a growth of only 4.2% was achieved as already noted.

The Government of India's revenue receipts, particularly projections for 2026-27 (BE) of tax revenues are cautious and are likely to be achieved. But the concern is that the buoyancy of Centre's gross tax revenues in 2026-27 (BE) has fallen to 0.8, well below the benchmark of 1. This consists of a buoyancy of 1.1 of direct taxes, which has a share of 61.2%, and a buoyancy of 0.3 of indirect taxes, which has a share of 38.8% in Centre's gross tax revenues. The main reason for the lower overall buoyancy is linked to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections, which are not expected to keep pace with GDP growth in 2026-27 (BE). In view of the high pressure on increasing expenditure, both developmental and welfare, the government should take a good look at the indirect taxes structure and raise their buoyancy to 1.

The recommendations of the Sixteenth Finance Commission (FC16) have not provided for any change in the share of States in the divisible pool of central taxes, keeping it at 41%.

The assignment of taxes to the States, therefore, has remained the same at 3.9% of GDP in 2025-26 (RE) and 2026-27 (BE). Also, the FC16 did not recommend any revenue deficit grants or sector/State-specific grants. Because of discontinuation of revenue deficit grants, there would be a reduction in the overall transfers to the States as compared to FC15. In fact, there has also been a reduction in other components of FC grants – the reason why total FC grants to the States have fallen from 0.43% of GDP in 2025-26 (RE) – the last year under the recommendations of FC15 – to 0.33% in 2026-27 (BE), the first year under the recommendations of the FC16. Usually, in the first year of an FC award period, there is a step jump in the volume of grants.

Pace of fiscal consolidation

The slowdown in the pace of fiscal consolidation is also a major concern. The pace of reduction in the fiscal deficit to GDP ratio has progressively fallen in the post-COVID-19 years. Considering the period from 2023-24, the annual reduction in this ratio in successive years was 0.7% points in 2024-25, 0.4% points in 2025-26 (RE) and only 0.1% point in 2026-27 (BE). The change in the targeting strategy from fiscal deficit to targeting the debt-GDP ratio also does not give much confidence. In fact, the debt-GDP ratio and fiscal deficit to GDP ratio are interdependent and move in tandem depending on the nominal GDP growth.

A transparent strategy would be to give the glide path of debt-GDP ratio and fiscal deficit relative to GDP with an underlying assumption of nominal GDP growth for the next five years. It should also indicate as to when the respective targets committed to in the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act 2018, that is, of 40% for debt-GDP ratio and of 3% for fiscal deficit to GDP ratio are likely to be achieved.

It is also useful to note that maintaining an unduly high debt-GDP ratio leads to a high interest payment to revenue receipts ratio. The effective interest rate for central government debt is estimated at 7.12% in 2026-27 (BE). This rate has been rising progressively for the last three years. In fact, as per the 2026-27 (BE), the interest payment to revenue receipts ratio is close to 40%, thereby squeezing the space for the required primary expenditures.

It must be stressed that the limit of fiscal deficit at 3% of GDP has a strong logic behind it. If the Centre and States take 8%-9% of GDP, the investible resources available for the private sector will come down strongly. In this situation, it is difficult to expect private investment to pick up.

A good framework

Taken together, the Budget presents a good road map to achieve the status of a developed country by 2047. It has highlighted the critical areas where the government and country must focus on. Sustained growth needs monetary and fiscal stability. The path of fiscal consolidation requires a relook.

The views expressed are personal

The U.S. trade deal — gains from economic diplomacy

Anant Goenka

is President, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), and Vice-Chairman, RPG Group

Industry must use the opportunities that the India-U.S. trade deal presents

India's trade playbook is working strongly, steadily and at scale. Its new trade architecture resembles a newly built expressway, anchored in strategic trade agreements that will enable faster, more predictable movement for trade. After concluding a major free trade agreement with the European Union (EU), the United Kingdom and other partners, India has now secured a consequential trade deal with the United States.

The road to this deal was neither short nor simple. Shaped through a demanding and intricate process, the deal stands as a testament to the strength, steadiness and foresight of Indian negotiators. After nearly a year of sustained dialogue, technical negotiations and quiet diplomacy, India and the U.S. agreed upon the lower tariff of 18%. The reduction of U.S. tariffs on Indian goods to this competitive level is a huge boost to Indian exports, providing improved market access, policy certainty and avenues for new strategic partnerships.

A growing network of partnerships

The India-U.S. trade deal represents an important outcome in India's expanding network of international trade partnerships. The trade agreements with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), the U.K., and the EU give India preferential market access to the whole of Europe. Agreements with Australia and New Zealand make India a key partner of the Pacific, trade agreements with Oman and United Arab Emirates provide greater access to West Asia, and the latest deal with the U.S. deepens India's stronghold in America – a clear reflection of India's deep integration with the world.

The U.S. is the largest import market in the world and India's biggest export destination, accounting for almost one-fifth of India's total exports. Indian exports to the U.S. span a wide range of sectors, which includes apparel, gems and jewellery, agricultural products, footwear, leather and several other manufacturing products, supporting both employment and manufacturing value chains in India. With the elevated U.S. tariff levels of 50% last year, several Indian exporters were at a competitive disadvantage in this critical market. The revised tariff not only provides meaningful relief and improves India's relative position *vis-à-vis* competing suppliers but also provides a constructive basis for advancing discussions under the ongoing India-U.S. Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA). By easing immediate trade frictions, the agreement creates space to address broader issues such as regulatory cooperation, market access and supply chain under the BTA.

The gains and broader implications

The clearest gains from the tariff reduction are likely to accrue to employment-intensive export sectors, particularly apparel. The U.S. is the world's largest apparel import market, and with Indian exports now facing an 18% tariff, lower than key competitors such as Vietnam and Bangladesh, Indian manufacturers regain price competitiveness in several high-volume categories. Similar dynamics apply to gems and jewellery (where margins are highly sensitive to tariff changes and the U.S. remains a critical destination), as well as to marine products, processed foods, footwear and leather (where even modest tariff moderation materially improves landed costs). A lower tariff will enhance export viability across these sectors and support India's positioning in diversified global supply chains, further encouraging these industries to go for capacity expansion.

On the whole, the reduction in U.S. tariffs on Indian goods immediately enhances India's competitive position relative to several major exporting nations that face higher duties, including China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Brazil, South Africa, Pakistan as well as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries. This competitive positioning builds up India's export sectors and supports the country's long-term goal of becoming a global manufacturing hub.

Beyond immediate economic relief, the deal opens pathways for long-term growth and boosts the overall India-U.S. economic relationship. It encourages joint ventures, technology partnerships and investment in high-value sectors, fostering innovation, employment and skill development.

For India, it consolidates global economic leadership and strengthens the country's capacity to engage in high-value international partnerships. For the U.S., it highlights the advantages of partnering with India to drive innovation, expand markets and reinforce supply chains. Progress on tariffs supports deeper engagement across regulatory co-operation, digital trade, clean energy and innovation-led sectors. The deal creates a mutually beneficial cycle of growth and opportunity, laying the foundation for collaboration that extends beyond commerce.

From a strategic perspective, closer economic ties complement cooperation in wider forums such as the Quad (India, Australia, Japan, the U.S.) where supply-chain resilience and trusted partnerships are central priorities. A stable trade relationship reinforces these objectives.

From tariffs to trust, a strategic reset in ties

This trade deal is more than a temporary adjustment of tariffs. It restores trust, unlocks economic opportunities and shores up a constructive strategic relationship. The India-U.S. partnership is poised to expand in areas which include technology, defence, energy and high-value manufacturing.

The deal demonstrates how thoughtful negotiation and shared priorities can turn complex challenges into lasting opportunities. It reveals how two democracies, when willing to engage thoughtfully, can craft solutions that serve national interests while advancing global stability. The India-U.S. trade deal is not just an economic milestone. It represents a renewed, balanced and strategic partnership, setting the stage for deeper cooperation and mutual prosperity in the decades ahead.

The India-U.S. trade improves access to the most important export destination, strengthens competitiveness across key sectors and supports the next phase of bilateral economic engagement. With policy momentum in place, the focus now shifts to industry to leverage these opportunities through investment, scale and enhanced competitiveness.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

About Parliament

There are serious concerns about parliamentary functioning and democratic accountability, as the ruckus in Parliament shows. While the Treasury benches have cited "unruly conduct" and procedural rules to highlight the conduct of the Opposition, the core issue remains the government's refusal to address sensitive issues. There are matters of national security that deserve a transparent explanation, not procedural avoidance.

Further, the finalisation of the India-U.S. trade deal adds urgency to the need for clarity.

Parliament is the forum for debate on issues of national importance. Repeated adjournments and mass suspensions weaken the spirit of deliberation and risk turning the House into a site of confrontation rather than accountability. A vibrant democracy requires confidence in parliamentary scrutiny. Open debate, not suppression, is the true measure of national strength.

Vidyasagar Reddy Kethiri,
Warangal, Telangana

Business in Parliament seems to be a fine example of indiscipline and chaos. Such behaviour only makes one hang one's head in shame. The Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha seems to be comfortable with unruly behaviour. The Opposition has a right to voice its grievances but there are protocols to be observed.

Ashok Jayaram,
Bengaluru

The fine print matters

It is only after the dust settles on the India-U.S. trade deal and the fine print is read that India can pat itself on the back for having successfully negotiated with someone like U.S. President Donald Trump (Front page, "U.S. deal will not include sensitive sectors: Goyal", February 4).

Mr. Trump is someone who drives a hard bargain. Mr. Trump seems to have already decided that India has agreed to halt oil imports from Russia and would instead purchase oil from the U.S. and Venezuela. It is strange to have the Indian side maintain a stony silence (Inside pages, "No word on India stopping oil purchases, says Kremlin", February 4). Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal may say that sensitive sectors such as agriculture and dairy are outside the deal but there needs to be confirmation of this by the U.S.

C.V. Aravind,
Bengaluru

Leading from the front

Without going into the details of the arguments made by the incumbent Chief Minister of West Bengal, Mamata Banerjee, the first for a sitting Chief Minister in India, in the Supreme Court of India, it is hard to look past the optics of it all. Ms. Banerjee has built her politics and brand TMC around a welfare state that cares for its citizens come what may. With elections round the corner, she did not go to court to win the case on SIR against the Election Commission of India. She went with the singular objective of convincing the electorate of Bengal, who are indeed facing harassment due to various procedural issues, including surname spellings, that she would leave no stone unturned to secure the well-being of Bengalis. Those behind the ill-advised SIR may have just handed Ms. Banerjee a major boost to her election campaign. Elections in India are also about sentiment and Ms. Banerjee may have cleverly used that.

Argha Mallick,
Bengaluru

Corrections & Clarifications

In a report, "Indian, U.S. industry bodies and leaders laud tariff deal" ('Business' page, February 4, 2026), the abbreviation IESA was mistakenly expanded as India Energy Storage Alliance. It should have been India Electronics and Semiconductor Association.

The Readers' Editor's office can be contacted by Telephone: +91-44-28576347/28576300; E-mail:readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

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A turning point for nuclear deterrence

Priyanjali Malik
writes on nuclear politics and security

The rupture between Europe and Donald Trump's U.S. over Greenland may be papered over in time, but Europe's trust in the U.S. as a reliable North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ally has been irreparably broken. As the last remaining arms control treaty limiting Russia's nuclear arsenal comes to an end, conversations about defending Europe are acquiring a sharper edge.

NATO came together in 1949 as a defensive nuclear alliance against the Soviet Union with the U.S. as its *primus inter pares*– the ultimate guarantor of the security of its western European members. Now, the hegemon has turned on its own alliance, over Mr. Trump's desire to acquire Greenland, a sovereign territory under the jurisdiction of NATO member Denmark. Mr. Trump's bullying and economic warfare has broken trust, and without trust NATO as a nuclear alliance is hollowed out. How Europe responds to this rupture will shape not only the future of the continent's security, but also the future of conversations about nuclear deterrence. Depending on whether the new security architecture of Europe privileges nuclear deterrence, thinking about nuclear weapons will either be updated to reflect the lessons of the 80 years since a nuclear weapon was last detonated, or continue to echo conversations that took place when the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) separated the world into nuclear haves and have-nots.

The nuclear conversation

The intervening years since the NPT restrained horizontal proliferation have seen threats to world security shift from nuclear rivalry to terrorism and extremism; climate change; economic stress; inequality; and regional rivalries. While none of these is easily addressed by nuclear weapons, conversations about nuclear possession and use continue to privilege nukes as the ultimate guarantor of peace and security even as great power rivalry returns to the global stage.

Moreover, discussions about 'what deters' appear to have ossified. At the dawn of the nuclear age, when possessors were still building their arsenals, there was a debate on whether deterrence rested on certainty or uncertainty. Some believed that uncertainty was enough; that allowing an adversary to not be certain that any adventurism would not be countered with a nuclear response was enough for deterrence to work. A form of this deterrence arguably operated between India and Pakistan between the 1980s and 1998. Israel, with its opaque nuclear status, also relies on this uncertainty. For the rest of the nuclear possessors, a complex interplay of great power politics led to growing stockpiles and an emphasis on the certainty of a nuclear response. Testing demonstrated intent and number of weapons indicated resolve.

Yet, even as nuclear states were racing to stockpile warheads, a taboo on nuclear use was gaining strength. A nuclear weapon has not been deployed since 1945. While nuclear threats have been issued, and states have developed ever smaller and more 'useable' weapons (tactical or battlefield nukes), nuclear use, to the best of our knowledge, has never been seriously contemplated.

Arms control agreements between the U.S. and the Soviet Union/Russia, along with the global non-proliferation architecture may have contributed to sparing the world another Hiroshima, but thinking on nuclear deterrence remains essentially unchanged. And now, after a sharp reduction in nuclear stockpiles between the U.S. and Russia, the pendulum may be swinging back.

China, Russia and the U.S. are ambitiously modernising their nuclear stockpiles. China has reportedly added 100 warheads a year since 2023 to reach a total of 600. In 2015, the U.K. reversed a 2006 decision to reduce its stockpile and is at 225 warheads. The last remaining arms control agreement between Russia and the U.S. –New START – expires on February 5, and if both states start increasing their stockpiles from the current 5,459 and 5,277, respectively, it will send a clear message of moving back to Cold War ideas of deterrence.

Lessons from Ukraine

The war in Ukraine should have led to a more serious debate about what deters. Russian President Vladimir Putin had made nuclear threats before his invasion and then again in October 2022. Yet those threats were countered not by the certainty of a nuclear response, but by the certainty of a robust response that left the nuclear element unclear. It is worth remembering that Ukraine – a non-nuclear country – has been able to defend itself against a nuclear adversary. Yes, it has had help and yes, it has lost territory, but Ukraine has not yet been defeated by its nuclear neighbour.

Therefore, what happens in the next few months as Europe comes up with a security architecture that does not rely on the U.S could reshape nuclear thinking.

Apart from some tepid discussion about how France and the U.K. might extend their nuclear umbrella to cover Europe, most of the previous debate appeared to return to hugging the U.S. ever closer. In the meantime, an ad hoc grouping of mainly European states, called the Coalition of the Willing, has come together to guarantee Ukraine's security. Ukraine now has experience in defending itself against a nuclear state. Against this backdrop, whether Europe chooses to base its new security architecture on some sort of replacement nuclear alliance, or on a defensive alliance that may have a nuclear element, will shape future discussions about nuclear weapons and deterrence.

At the dawn of the nuclear age, when possessors were still building their arsenals, there was a debate on whether deterrence rested on certainty or uncertainty

A city gridlocked and stranded

Years of poor mobility planning have made Bengaluru a traffic nightmare

STATE OF PLAY

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
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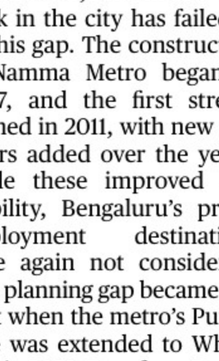
Bengaluru's traffic problem has long been a subject of public frustration, with commuters losing an extraordinary number of hours on choked roads. Therefore, the latest TomTom report that ranked Bengaluru as the second-most congested city in the world has come as no surprise. For a city that positions itself as India's technology and innovation capital, this is an indictment of years of poor mobility planning.

Congestion in Bengaluru is not merely the result of rising population or economic growth. It is the outcome of planning choices that failed to align transport infrastructure with how the city actually functions. Data from Karnataka Transport Department show that the number of registered vehicles in Bengaluru has risen sharply from about one crore in 2020-21 to nearly 1.23 crore in April 2025. This growth has occurred alongside the concentration of employment in a few major clusters, mainly Electronics City, the Whitefield-ITPL corridor, and the 17-km Outer Ring Road (ORR) stretch, that houses lakhs of daily office commuters. These corridors were not initially prioritised in the city's public transport expansion.

Inadequacy of mass transit

Bengaluru's commute backbone remains the Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), operating 7,067 buses, catering to nearly 48 lakh passengers every day, the highest ridership for any city-run public transport system in India. Despite its scale, the BMTC has struggled with a



shrinking fleet strength relative to demand, slow average speeds due to mixed traffic, and the absence of dedicated bus priority lanes. The pressure on the BMTC recently prompted former Infosys CFO T.V. Mohandas Pai to suggest that the BMTC should be opened up to private participation, which drew strong opposition from Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy, who argued that public transport cannot be run for profit. While the Minister's defence of a public-run bus system is valid, without sustained capital investment, bus priority infrastructure and increase in number of buses, the BMTC cannot solve the traffic issue.

Moreover, the metro network in the city has failed to fill this gap. The construction of Namma Metro began in 2007, and the first stretch opened in 2011, with new corridors added over the years. While these improved city mobility, Bengaluru's prime employment destinations were again not considered. This planning gap became evident when the metro's Purple Line was extended to Whitefield in 2023. Data from Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) showed an immediate increase in ridership of around 2.5 lakh to 3 lakh passengers a day. A similar trend emerged after the Yellow Line to Electronics City opened in August 2025, with daily boardings on the new line alone crossing 60,000 within weeks. Urban transport experts have pointed out that the earliest metro corridors prioritised areas with relatively lower commuter demand, while major employment hubs had to wait over a decade. The result is visible on the ORR stretch. Despite being the city's largest employment stretch, the ORR will have to wait till 2027 for operational metro connectivity.

Wait for suburban trains

Bengaluru has long needed a high-capacity regional rail system. The Bengaluru Suburban Railway Project was finally sanctioned in October 2020, with an ambitious plan to operate trains across four corridors spanning 148 km and 58 stations. The project was proposed to serve nearly 20 lakh commuters daily. But recently the deadline to open the project was pushed to 2030 from October 2026. Moreover, last- and first-mile connectivity remain notoriously inadequate in the city. Shared auto services are restricted, pedestrian infrastructure is inconsistent, and cycling infrastructure remains fragmented. While cab and auto aggregators have stepped in to fill some gaps, commuters report the unavailability of services during peak hours or sharp fare surges.

The overall fragmentation of the transport network in Bengaluru is compounded by a disempowered Bengaluru Metropolitan Land Transport Authority (BMLTA). Conceived as an apex body to coordinate transport planning across agencies, BMLTA has yet to function as an effective decision-making authority. It seems that without regulatory intervention in the broader mobility framework, aggregators have become unreliable when demand is the highest.

Half of the staff in 1.5 lakh schools are contract teachers

At least 16 lakh teachers are working on contract in India for lesser wages and benefits

DATA POINT

Sambavi Parthasarathy

For more than a week, contract teachers in Puducherry have been protesting about the regularisation of their jobs. On February 3, their protest march towards the Assembly was stopped by the police. The protest in Puducherry is the latest in a series of demonstrations carried out by contract teachers across the country demanding fair treatment and regularisation of their jobs.

Less than a year ago, contract teachers staged a sit-in protest in Puducherry near the Assembly for over four days. They called off their agitation after Chief Minister N. Rangasamy reassured them of the government's commitment towards the regularisation of their jobs. Months later, in November 2025, Puducherry's Home and Education Minister A. Namassivayam said that the government was planning to regularise the services of 292 contract teachers. Still, the protests are back again this year.

The Puducherry incident is just the latest flashpoint in a broader national struggle of contract teachers, that spans Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, and Jharkhand, over unfair treatment and lack of permanent positions at various points of time.

Contract teachers, often referred to as para teachers, guest teachers, and *shiksha mitras*, were initially hired by States to meet teacher shortages in the early 1990s. These teachers were employed on a short-term basis for wages lower than those of regular teachers.

According to the latest UDISE+ data, teachers employed on a contractual and part-time basis form about 16% of India's school teacher workforce today. In absolutes, that translates to over 16 lakh teachers hired for lesser wages. **(Chart 1)**

Often, these contracts are rolled over, and contract teachers continue to work as much as regular teachers, without the benefits that come with the latter's position such as higher pay and stability. Research reports have suggested that hiring contract teachers has become a cost-effective move for States to ensure teacher availability. In fact, a research report by the World Bank published in 2009 noted that salaries earned by contract teachers were one-fourth or less of those earned by regular teachers. While these teachers form only 16% of the entire workforce, a school-level analysis shows that the problem is more pronounced in specific areas. In over 1.5 lakh schools in India, contract and part-time teachers make up at least half of the entire teaching workforce.

As shown in **Chart 2**, in about 21% of private schools, at least half of the workforce are contract or part-time teachers – the highest such share among all types of schools. Close to 8% of State government schools, totalling more than 77,000 schools, also fall under this category.

As per the latest data in 2024-25, this trend is similar across rural and urban areas **(Chart 3)**, an interesting fact, as this shows that the lack of teachers alone can't be the reason for hiring contract teachers.

A State-wise analysis **(Chart 4)** shows that most of these schools with a higher reliance on contract and part-time teachers are concentrated in the northeastern States, such as Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya.

More than 30% of schools in Jharkhand, Haryana and Chandigarh also show this trend.

The Punjab and Haryana High Court, on November 14 last year, held that administration cannot "misuse" contractual labels and ordered the regularisation of all Chandigarh teachers appointed under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and who have completed more than 10 years of service.

Long-standing demands: Contract teachers hold a protest after the march to press for job regularisation, in Puducherry on Tuesday. S.S.KUMAR

Same work but fraction of the pay

The data for the charts were sourced from UDISE+ reports (2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25)

Contract teachers staging a protest, demanding regularisation, in Puducherry in April, 2025. S.S.KUMAR

Chart 1: Share of teachers in the total workforce employed on a contractual and part-time basis. Figures in %

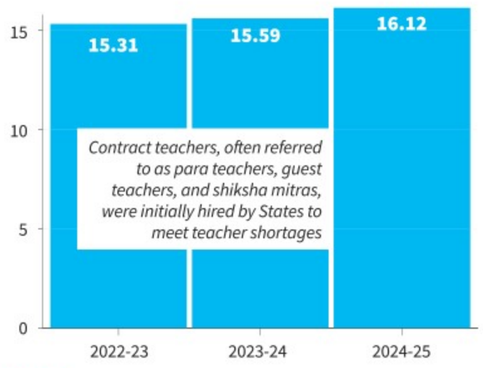


Chart 2: Management-wise share of schools where contract and part-time teachers make up at least half of the workforce

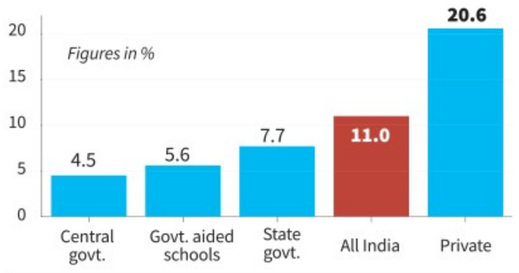


Chart 3: Location-wise share of schools where contract and part-time teachers make up at least half of the workforce

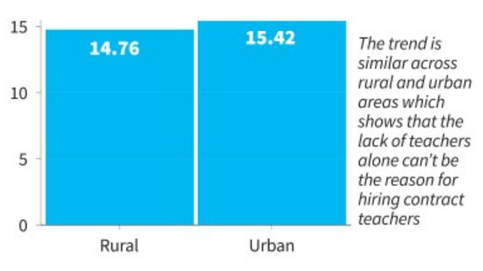
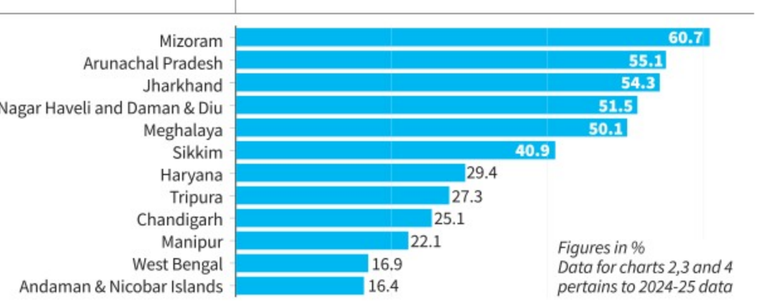


Chart 4: State/UT-wise share of schools where contract and part-time teachers make up at least half of the workforce



The minutes of the meeting of the Project Approval Board (April, 2025) showed that Haryana had 7,626 vacancies of teachers in elementary schools, 4,070 in secondary, and 3,847 in senior secondary schools

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 5, 1976

Use of nuclear devices for oil recovery possible

Bombay, Feb 4: Dr. Homi N. Sethna, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission said here to-day that the AEC was probably one of the few organisations in the country which had conceived and implemented an integrated and comprehensive programme which had yielded demonstrable public benefits.

Dr. Sethna was participating in a seminar on "The decade of scientific progress."

Dr. Sethna said that one of the most important achievements was in May 1974 when a peaceful underground nuclear experiment was successfully carried out in Rajasthan.

The analysis of data collected from this experiment indicated that such devices could be effectively used for increasing recovery of oil and natural gas and many other infrastructural development projects.

He expressed the hope that the next decade would be one of consolidation and expansion of the atomic energy programme. A new reactor research centre was being built near Madras for research in fast breeder technology which was really the nuclear technology of the future, considering India's limited resources of uranium and the high efficiency of this reactor system. He said that several new research programmes were also planned in Trombay.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 5, 1926

Preserving tropical fruits

Rugby, Feb. 4: Laboratory experiments conducted by Professor Thompson of Liverpool University are stated to have resulted in the discovery of a new method of fruit storage whereby it will be possible to import tropical fruits into England without deterioration in quality.

It is claimed that the new method may ultimately supersede the cold storage and *Daily Mail* states that fruit importers are instituting further tests to be made on commercial basis.

Mr. Thompson says the basis of the new method is the production, while in store, of natural atmospheric conditions to which the fruit is accustomed. By a simple apparatus temperature and humidity of air are constantly maintained and fruit in these conditions becomes dormant. He stated that the adaption of ships' holds to suit the new method of storage will present no difficulty.

From Page One

Khemchand sworn in as new Manipur CM

Speaking with journalists before heading for a Cabinet meeting, the Chief Minister said, "Manipur has 36 communities, and, naturally, we have two Deputy Chief Ministers representing two major communities." He said the Prime Minister, Home Minister Amit Shah, and the BJP's national president Nitin Nabin entrusted him with taking the State forward and ensuring lasting peace.

Mr. Dikho said the new government will try to fulfil the responsibilities given by the Centre. "We will reach out to the people. We will ensure inclusivity and transparency," he said.

Reacting to opposition to the government formation from certain quarters, he said it was expected. "It takes time to get things going," he added.

Two Kuki-Zo MLAs of the BJP – former Director-General of Police L.M. Khaute (Churachandpur seat) and Ngursanglur Sanate (Tipaimukh) – were present during the swearing-in ceremony. They reached Imphal from New Delhi earlier in the day, along with the other Manipur BJP leaders and the party's central observers Sambit Patra and Tarun Chugh.

Ms. Kipgen's swearing-in as one of the two Deputy Chief Ministers was significant, as the Kuki-Zo Council (KZC), Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM), and other bodies had asked the Kuki-Zo MLAs not to be a part of the government. These bodies want a Union Territory-like separate administration as the condition for the Kuki-Zos to participate in governance.

The KZC warned that any Kuki-Zo MLA who chooses to disregard the "collective decision" by joining the government would do so in their individual capacity and would be "held responsible for any consequences".

The KIM stated that no Kuki-Zo MLA should, under any circumstances, associate with or lend legitimacy to a "so-called popular government that stands in complete disregard of the suffering, aspirations, and political will of the Kuki-Zo people." The ethnic violence had left more than 260 people dead and an estimated 62,000 others internally displaced. A large majority of them are still lodged in relief camps.

SIR is a process of deletion, not inclusion, Bengal CM says in SC

Mamata says she moved the court as a citizen after her letters to EC received no reply, slams poll body for hurried exercise and deletion of names; EC will have to find out solution, every genuine person must remain on electoral roll, CJI tells her

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee leaves the Supreme Court premises on Wednesday. PTI

Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, heading a three-judge Supreme Court Bench, assured West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, standing in the front row of his crowded courtroom on Wednesday, that the Election Commission (EC) cannot "run away" from its constitutional commitment to ensure that "every single genuine citizen" is included in the electoral roll during the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) exercise.

The Chief Minister, who insisted on addressing the Bench, said she had only a "humble request". "Sir, save democracy," Ms. Banerjee urged.

In what may be unprecedented in the annals of the top court, a sitting Chief Minister, who filed a writ petition in her own individual capacity, pushed her way to the front of the courtroom and requested the Bench to allow her to speak for "five minutes".

"May I explain, Sir?"

"May I explain, Sir? I belong to that State," Ms. Banerjee addressed the Bench. "Is there any doubt about it, Madam?" Chief Justice Kant assented to her request.

Ms. Banerjee said she had moved the court in her individual capacity as a citizen after her letters to the EC, as the Chief Minister had received no reply.

The Chief Minister said nearly 1.4 crore voters in West Bengal were excluded from the electoral roll for "logical discrepancies". About 50% of them were purged due to minor mismatches or spelling variations in their names.

"EC won't run away"

"For every problem there is a solution. We have to look for the solution so that no innocent citizen is left out. Every single genuine person must remain on the electoral roll... But may be because of the local dialect or due to the pronunciation, genuine voters are being left out. The EC will have to find out the solution. They will not like to run away from that responsibility. Due to these mistakes, genuine voters must not be excluded," Chief Justice Kant said.

Ms. Banerjee recounted how women who had married and not changed their surnames were ousted from the draft electoral rolls.

Minor mismatches in names or surnames like 'Roy' and 'Ray' were enough for deletion. "The SIR is a process of deletion and not inclusion," she said.

At one point, the Chief Justice suggested having State officials conversant in the local dialect to help the EC with the names.

"But, Sir, what was the hurry to conduct this exercise after nearly 20 years when elections are near? Why are they targeting only Bengal? Why did they announce this exercise when people were busy with the festival and harvest seasons... Sir, more than 100 people have died, including booth-level officers... Tell me why Bengal has been targeted, why not Assam?" she persisted.

'WhatsApp Commission'

She termed the EC as the "WhatsApp Commission", alleging the Constitutional body used the instant messaging platform to communicate critical instructions and warnings. "Such casual communication channels for such a critical exercise strikes at the root of democracy...," Ms. Banerjee said.

She said the EC had appointed 8,100 'micro-observers' in West Bengal to act as a "supreme authority" over the Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) Senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, interjected for the EC saying micro-observers were appointed as the State government had not cooperated with a request to provide Class-II officers to fill up the ranks of EROs.

Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta and senior advocate Dama Seshadhiri Naidu said the EC, in turn, wanted to point out specific instances of hostility from the State government.

Senior advocate Shyam Divan, representing Ms. Banerjee, along with senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, for the poet-writer Joy Goswami, said there were over a crore hearings still pending ahead of the February 7 deadline.

"This would mean 15.5 lakh hearings have to be held in a day. Completing more than one crore hearing before February 7 would be virtually impossible, keeping in mind the logistical challenges," Mr. Divan submitted.

Issuing notice on Ms. Banerjee's petition, the court scheduled the next hearing on February 9.

3 unidentified terrorists killed in J&K, says Army

Peerzada Ashiq
JAMMU

Three terrorists were killed in two separate anti-terror operations in Udhampur and Kishtwar districts in Jammu on Wednesday, the Army said.

Two were neutralised in the Jophar forest area of Basantgarh in Udhampur, where an encounter broke out around 4 p.m. on Tuesday after security forces detected terrorists hiding in a natural cave.

"Contact with terrorists was established yesterday [Tuesday], and since then, they were prevented from breaking contact. Following a calibrated and coordinated response, two terrorists have been successfully neutralised," an Army spokesman said.

The Army said the operation, codenamed Operation Kiya, highlighted inter-agency coordination, tactical precision and high standards of professionalism. "The operation has successfully concluded and the area remains under surveillance," he said.

Later in the day, one more terrorist was killed in an ongoing anti-terror operation in the Chenab Valley's Kishtwar district. "One terrorist has been successfully neutralised. The operation is in progress," the Army said.

Denied phone access, 3 minors jump off balcony

The death of the sisters came to light as residents of the apartments woke up to the cries of their parents. "When we went to their residence on the ninth floor, we found the room adjacent to the balcony locked," said the DCP .

After their parents had gone to bed on Tuesday night, the three sisters allegedly went to the balcony and jumped from it. "In the note that they left behind, they had written that they were not being allowed to watch Shinchan, Doraemon, TV serials and felt very lonely," said the officer. The children did not have their own phones but used one of their parent's phone to get online, the DCP said.

"Till now, no link of any Korean task-based game has been found, preliminary investigation suggests the girls were addicted to TV series and social media. However, all angles are being investigated," said the officer.

The girls' father, Chetan Kumar, a businessman, is from the capital's Burari area. He has been living in the Sahibabad area for the past three years with his wives Sujata and Heena, who are sisters, and their five children - four girls and a boy aged 10. "Before this, the family lived in Tilla Mode for eight years. The three sisters last attended Green Valley School, where their academic performance was sub-par," said the officer.

Inside the gated society, several neighbours told *The Hindu* that they only knew the family from a distance.

(Those in distress can reach out to Tele MANAS at 14416 to seek help)

Trinamool hails Mamata's SC appearance as 'big win'

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

The party claims that the BJP and EC are harassing people in Bengal and trying to delete genuine voters

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's appearance before the Supreme Court, where she sought to raise objections to the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR), has come as a major shot in the arm for the Trinamool Congress. The ruling party hailed the development as a "BIG WIN for Hon'ble Chief Minister Smt. @MamataOfficial", and said the Supreme Court directed officials to act with sensitivity.

Photos and videos of the Chief Minister appearing before a Division Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Justice Surya Kant were widely circulated by the party on social media. "Inside the Supreme Court, Mamata Banerjee wore the lawyer's coat, argued with facts, and forced accountability," the party posted on social media.

"History is written by those who refuse to stay silent. When democracy is under attack, Didi stands up for Bengal with courage and conviction. Today's fight is not about power, it is about the people," the Trinamool Congress said in another social media message.

Several Trinamool Congress leaders lauded the efforts of the party chairperson in arguing against the SIR before the Supreme Court. The Chief Minister has opposed the SIR since the exercise was held ahead of the Assembly election in Bihar last year. Between November 2025 and January 2026, she wrote six letters to Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. Her visit to Delhi is being described as the culmination of the protest against the SIR. Apart from parading those who, according to the party, suffered on account of the SIR, she held a meeting with the CEC alleging mistreatment.

SIR as poll plank

While the SIR is aimed at cleansing the electoral rolls in West Bengal, the exercise has become an election issue in the State. For the Trinamool Congress, which is facing anti-incumbency after three terms, the SIR has emerged as a poll plank. The party says the BJP, in collusion with the Election Commission, is harassing people in the State and attempting to remove genuine voters.

Mamata's visit to SC was part of 'scripted drama', says BJP

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA/DELHI

Samik Bhattacharya

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) alleged on Wednesday that West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's appearance before the Supreme Court was aimed at disrupting the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in her State.

Describing Ms. Banerjee's visit to the Supreme Court and the Election Commission as a "scripted drama", BJP leaders said it was a "flop show" as she returned "empty-handed".

Leader of Opposition Suvendu Adhikari, speaking from his Nandigram constituency, accused Ms. Banerjee of declaring "war" on the SIR. "Mamata is doing all this to derail the SIR process and influence votes based on the 2024 voter lists... She tried to stop the SIR process but failed miserably," he said, asserting that if the process was disrupted, West Bengal could face President's rule after May 5.

At a press conference in Delhi, the BJP alleged that booth-level officers (BLOs) were "compelled" to upload false documents during the SIR process under Ms. Banerjee's watch. State BJP president and Rajya Sabha member Samik Bhattacharya, along with Union Minister Sukanta Majumdar, said the process was under way in 12 States, with no uproar anywhere else, except in West Bengal.

"The Trinamool Congress's agenda is clear: Bangladeshi infiltrators and Rohingyas should remain on the West Bengal voter list; names of the deceased, fake voters, and people whose addresses are on vacant land should remain," Mr. Bhattacharya said.

The SIR issue is being raised as the Trinamool Congress knows its "days are numbered", he alleged.

Mr. Majumdar termed Ms. Banerjee's visit to the Supreme Court and the EC part of a "scripted drama" and called her submissions in the court a "complete political speech". He also alleged that errors in the voter data were deliberately introduced by State government employees under Trinamool influence.

SC orders SIT to probe bank scam linked to Anil Ambani

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said even a willingness to pay up may not save those involved in an alleged bank scam linked to the Anil Dhirubhai Ambani Group and its promoter Anil Ambani from criminal prosecution, if the CBI and the ED were able to unearth an intention to "siphon off" public funds.

The court directed the ED to constitute a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the scam, while ordering the CBI to conduct a "fair" probe into the "nexus, connivance, conspiracy, collusion" among bank officials, authorities, and the managements of the companies.

SC asks if govt. can reconsider Sonam Wangchuk's detention

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Gitanjali Angmo

The Supreme Court on Wednesday asked whether the Centre could rethink the detention of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk considering his health condition, while pointing out that he has been in confinement since September 2025, for nearly five months now.

A Bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and P.B. Varale observed that Mr. Wangchuk's health report was not good.

"Considering the health condition of the detainee... The report, which we saw earlier, shows that his health is not that good. Is there a possibility for the government to rethink, or even relook?" the Bench asked Additional Solicitorp-General K.M. Nataraj, appearing for the Centre.

Mr. Nataraj agreed to seek instructions. He, meanwhile, submitted that Mr. Wangchuk had made provocative speeches, which had led to violence in Leh in 2025.

"It was ultimately his provocative speech, provocation, instigation. The person need not actively participate, the propensity of a person to influence a group of persons... That is more than sufficient," Mr. Nataraj argued. The law officer contended that the order of Mr. Wangchuk's detention was approved on October 3, 2025, and there was no challenge to the approval order.

Mr. Wangchuk was detained under the National Security Act (NSA) on September 26, 2025, two days after violent protests demanding Statehood and Sixth Schedule status for Ladakh.

The top court was hearing a plea filed by Mr. Wangchuk's wife Gitanjali Angmo against his detention under the stringent NSA. The NSA empowers the Centre and States to detain individuals to prevent them from acting in a manner "prejudicial to the defence of India".

Ladakh leaders press for Statehood; talks with Home Ministry remain inconclusive

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Chering Dorjay Lakruk (centre), representing LAB, said that they were hopeful that the MHA would call another meeting soon. PTI

The talks between the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and Ladakh civil society leaders, being held after over three months, remained inconclusive, said Cherring Dorjay Lakruk, co-convener of the Leh Apex Body (LAB). The October 22, 2025, draft proposal submitted by the group regarding Statehood and inclusion of Ladakh under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, thus giving it a tribal status, was discussed at the meeting.

The leaders also demanded the unconditional release of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk and others who were detained after the September 24, 2025, violence in Leh city, where four persons were killed, and several were injured.

The LAB and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), which have been spearheading the movement for constitutional safeguards in the Union Territory, were called to New Delhi on Wednesday to participate in the meeting of the high-powered committee. The HPC is led by the Minister of State for Home Affairs.

The meeting continued for three hours, but the MHA officials only offered safeguards available under Article 371 of the Constitution and insisted on strengthening the hill councils.

Article 371 deals with "Temporary, Transitional and Special Provisions", and exists under Part XXI of the Constitution. It is currently applicable in 12 States.

"The results of the meeting were not satisfactory. We went with a positive outlook but it was not up to our expectations," said Asgar Karbalai, Co-Chairman, KDA.

Mr. Lakruk added that they were hopeful that the MHA would call for another meeting in the next 15-20 days. "The issue of detention of Sonam Wangchuk and others is dear to the people of Ladakh. The cases registered against them are illegal. We forcefully demanded the release of all of them and pressed for the withdrawal of cases," he said.

Rahul, Bittu trade barbs over Minister's party exit

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A sharp exchange of words between Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and Minister of State for Railways Ravneet Singh Bittu escalated into a row on Wednesday, prompting BJP-led Sikh groups to protest outside the Congress office here.

The confrontation took place near Parliament's "Makar Dwar", where Congress MPs were protesting the suspension of Opposition MPs from the Lok Sabha the previous day.

As Mr. Bittu was walking past the protesting MPs, Mr. Gandhi reportedly said, "Here is a traitor" – referring to Mr. Bittu's switch from the Congress to the BJP ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Extending his hand for a handshake, Mr. Gandhi said, "Hello brother, my traitor friend. Don't worry, you will come back (to the Congress)." To this, Mr. Bittu responded by calling him "*Desh ka dushman* (enemy of the country)".

Voices were raised as Mr. Bittu climbed the stairs leading into Parliament. Speaking to presspersons, he alleged that there was an attempt to manhandle him.

Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri later held a press conference, decrying Mr. Gandhi's "traitor" remark. He described it as "a slur on every Sikh".

Congress MLA Sukhpal Singh Khaira accused the BJP of conflating the criticism of Mr. Bittu to an insult to the community.

High drama in Lok Sabha; PM's speech delayed amid ruckus

Congress plans to allow Modi to reply only after Rahul gets to speak; party members protest BJP MP's 'disruptive' reading from books making allegations against Nehru, Indira Gandhi; Congress to frame joint strategy with other Opposition parties

Sandeep Phukan
NEW DELHI

Vocal protests: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi with suspended Lok Sabha members and others during a protest outside the Parliament complex on Wednesday. ANI

The Lok Sabha had to be adjourned for the day amid high drama on Wednesday as women MPs from Opposition parties walked across the aisle and held up banners in front of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's front-row seat ahead of his customary reply to the debate on the President's Address. They were protesting against a BJP MP's allegations against former Congress PMs.

Mr. Modi was not present but BJP MP Sandhya Rai, who was presiding over the proceedings as the chairperson, adjourned the House.

The Prime Minister had been scheduled to reply around 5 p.m to the discussion on the Motion thanking President Droupadi Murmu for her Address to the joint sitting of Parliament.

The Congress later hinted that it would allow the Prime Minister to speak only when the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, was permitted to speak.

Earlier in the day, Mr. Gandhi, who had brought a copy of former Army chief Manoj Mukund Naravane's "unreleased memoir" to claim that the Prime Minister had shed responsibility during the India-China conflict in 2020, had dared Mr. Modi to come to the House.

"I don't think the Prime Minister would have the guts to come to the Lok Sabha today, because if he comes, I will go physically and hand him this book," Mr. Gandhi told presspersons in the Parliament complex, displaying a copy of the retired General's memoir, *Four Stars of Destiny*.

On Monday, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla had prevented Mr. Gandhi from quoting excerpts from the book on the grounds that it had not been officially published.

'Slanderous allegations'

Around 2 p.m. on Wednesday, the House witnessed dramatic scenes when BJP MP Nishikant Dubey, participating in the debate on the Motion of Thanks, read out from books such as *Edwina and Nehru* and *Mitrokhin Archives* on the floor of the Lok Sabha to make slanderous allegations against former Prime Ministers Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi.

Congress members trooped into the Well and charged towards the BJP even as Krishna Prasad Tenneti, the Telugu Desam Party MP who was presiding over the proceedings, urged Mr. Dubey not to quote from any book.

Mr. Tenneti cited Rule 349 – which bars members from reading from any book, newspaper or letter, except in connection with the business of the House – in a bid to stop Mr. Dubey but it had little effect. The BJP MP went on for nearly three minutes without his microphone being muted.

'Deliberate disruption'

Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, speaking to presspersons outside the House, alleged that whenever the government wanted to disrupt the proceedings, it fielded Mr. Dubey.

"You get to speak during Zero Hour through ballot. While we tire waiting for our chance to speak, he gets Zero Hour almost daily. So, when the government wants disruption, he gets up," Ms. Vadra said. "A rule is cited when the LoP wants to speak but this *maharaj* [Mr. Dubey] could show as many as six books. This is an insult to democracy, Parliament and even the Honourable Speaker."

After the House was adjourned until 5 p.m., Congress members met Mr. Birla in his chamber, questioning the Chair's decision to allow Mr. Dubey and demanding action against him. By late evening, the Speaker's office had expunged many of the objectionable remarks from the House records.

"The LoP's microphone was switched off in 30 seconds, while Nishikant Dubey spoke for nearly five minutes. This is clear double standard by the government," said Congress MP K.C. Venugopal.

In the evening, floor leaders of the Congress met at party president Mallikarjun Kharge's residence and decided to formulate a joint strategy with other Opposition parties at a meeting on Thursday morning.

After the meeting, Congress communications chief Jairam Ramesh cited a precedent from June 10, 2004, when the BJP, then in the Opposition, did not allow then-Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to reply to the Motion of Thanks. He hinted that the current logjam will continue till Mr. Gandhi is allowed to speak.

Will notify questions on caste for Census as per norms: govt.

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The final questionnaire for caste enumeration is likely only in September. R.V. MOORTHY

The Union Home Ministry informed the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday that the questions on caste for the Census would be notified before the commencement of the second phase of the Census operation.

The questions, including on caste, for the second phase would be finalised and notified as per established procedure, Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai said in a written reply.

Responding to a question by Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam member Rajathi on whether the Ministry had received any representation from State governments, especially Tamil Nadu, recommending consultations with the States before finalising the guidelines for enumerating castes, the reply stated, "Several representations regarding the enumeration of caste have been received from various organisations of different States, including Tamil Nadu. The questions, including on caste, for the second phase will be finalised and notified as per the established procedure."

'Ahead of second phase'

The reply added that the intention of the Government of India in conducting Census 2027 had been notified.

"In the Census, caste also will be enumerated in the second phase. In India, the Census operation is conducted in two phases. In the first phase, i.e., the House Listing Operation (HLO), information regarding housing conditions, assets, amenities, etc., of each household is collected. In the second phase, i.e., Population Enumeration (PE), the demographic, socioeconomic, cultural, and other details of every person are collected. The Government of India has notified (on January 22, 2026) the questions for the first phase. Questions for the second phase, including the questions on caste, will be notified before the commencement of the second phase of the Census operation," the reply said.

As reported by *The Hindu*, the final questionnaire for caste enumeration is likely to be known only in September, when the second phase of the population Census 2027 will be carried out in Ladakh and the snow-bound areas of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand, ahead of the rest of the country.

Agriculture and dairy sectors protected in India-U.S. trade deal, Goyal tells Parliament

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

> The deal [with the U.S.] will help promote initiatives like 'Make in India' and 'Design in India', and will make India self-reliant ...deal will open huge opportunities for skilled Indians and MSMEs
>
> **PIYUSH GOYAL**
> Union Commerce Minister

Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal on Wednesday told Parliament that the government had been successful in protecting the Indian agriculture and dairy sectors in the India-U.S. trade deal.

Making a statement in both Houses of Parliament, Mr. Goyal said the deal would help make India self-reliant, and added that the labour-intensive sectors would receive a major boost in exports following the reduction in tariffs to 18%, which were earlier pegged at 50%.

The tariffs on India are among the lowest compared with its competitor nations, the Union Minister said in the Lok Sabha. "India has been successful in protecting the agricultural and dairy sectors," he said, adding that the deal would help promote initiatives such as "Make in India" and "Design in India", and would make India self-reliant. He said the deal would open huge opportunities for skilled Indians and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

He said both sides were working to complete the technical processes, and it would be announced soon. He added that ensuring energy security for Indians was the top priority of the government.

'National interest'

Observing that India needed goods from sectors such as aviation and nuclear energy, and the U.S. was a major player in these segments, he said the deal was in the national interest.

Throughout Mr. Goyal's statement in the Lok Sabha, the Opposition continued to protest on the issue of the stand-off with China in 2020 and the unpublished memoir of former Army chief M.M. Naravane. The Minister later posted on social media platform X, "Today in the Lok Sabha, I was scheduled to deliver a statement regarding the India-U.S. Trade Deal. However, when the government came prepared to provide a factual clarification on the subject, the Opposition began creating a ruckus. Consequently, I am releasing my full statement here for everyone's benefit."

In the Rajya Sabha, soon after he made his statement, the Opposition members sought clarifications. Though Chairman C.P. Radhakrishnan called senior Congress member Jairam Ramesh, he could not speak as other members also stood up.

Later, Mr. Radhakrishnan, citing Rules, said questions cannot be asked considering the sensitivity of the matter.

Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam leader Tiruchi Siva and CPI(M) member John Brittas questioned the decision to disallow clarifications. Mr. Ramesh, however, was not allowed to speak. Mr. Radhakrishnan later said since there was no decorum, Mr. Ramesh could not be called.

Jaishankar, Rubio welcome trade deal, discuss critical minerals, Quad cooperation

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

Hand in hand: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar with U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio in Washington. AP

Welcoming the trade deal, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent in Washington on Wednesday, where both sides agreed to "formalise" cooperation on critical minerals, and take forward their economic partnership.

The meetings came two days after a call between U.S. President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, after which they announced a reduction in U.S. tariffs on Indian goods to 18%, and the cancellation of 25% penalty tariffs for the purchase of Russian oil.

The Centre has come under sharp criticism from the Opposition over the lack of transparency and scant details of the India-U.S. trade deal, and in particular the U.S. government's statement that India has agreed to "stop buying" Russian oil, cut tariffs for most U.S. goods to zero, give U.S. agricultural products market access, and commit $500 billion for investments and purchase of American goods.

In a social media post, Mr. Jaishankar said that he had held a "wide-ranging conversation" with Mr. Rubio, and that discussions included "trade, energy, nuclear, defence, critical minerals and technology". "[We] agreed on the early meetings of various mechanisms to advance our shared interests," he said, though the two leaders did not take any questions from the media.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Jaishankar "underlined challenges of excessive concentration" of critical mineral supply chains, and expressed support for U.S. initiatives to de-risk them.

Mr. Jaishankar held the meetings ahead of attending the U.S.-led Critical Minerals Ministerial in Washington on Wednesday that called for "preferential trade zones" to secure semiconductor supply chains, in an effort to work around China's recent restrictions on trade in critical minerals, and build alternate supply routes.

The countries attending were invited to take membership of a grouping that will be shaped by the U.S., and included about 50 countries.

Restoring ties

Mr. Jaishankar's participation in the event is significant as many of the other countries present were represented by their Energy Ministers, and indicates a desire by Delhi and Washington to move quickly on restoring ties ruptured by a year of tensions, and U.S. tariffs on Indian goods.

Mr. Jaishankar's visit to Washington, his seventh since Mr. Trump's re-election in November 2024, is seen as a move to reset ties, and pick up the engagements that were sidelined in 2025, particularly on the Quad and Indo-Pacific cooperation, and critical minerals and semiconductor technology. India is expected to be invited to join the U.S.-led Pax Silica Initiative launched in December 2025, U.S. Ambassador to India Sergio Gor had announced in January.

India will host the Artificial Intelligence Impact Summit later in February, where a high-level U.S. delegation is expected. Meanwhile, the government still hopes to host the Quad summit this year, which it was unable to do in 2025. Mr. Jaishankar discussed Quad cooperation with U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who has thus far not visited India.

"Secretary Rubio and Minister Jaishankar concluded their meeting by expressing their commitment to expanding bilateral and multilateral cooperation through the Quad. They acknowledged that a prosperous Indo-Pacific region remains vital to advancing our shared interests," the U.S. State Department said.

Minister's statement lacks substance and clarity, says Congress

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday said the statement on the India-U.S. trade agreement made by Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal in Parliament lacked substance and clarity.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh described it as a "non-statement", arguing that it offered no concrete details as negotiations were still under way. "Piyush Goyal's high-sounding claims go completely contrary to what the U.S. President, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, and the U.S. Trade Representative have put out in their names on social media. It is 100% clear that Monday's announcement of the deal at the urging of Prime Minister was for grabbing headlines—nothing more, nothing else," Mr. Ramesh said in a post on X.

His Rajya Sabha colleague Randeep Singh Surjewala said it was "deeply disturbing" that details of the agreement were disclosed by U.S. officials. He also raised concerns over reported commitments to reduce tariffs on agricultural products and to import American goods worth $500 billion.

Kharge warns Centre of farm protests against deal with U.S.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Mallikarjun Kharge

Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday warned the Centre of massive farmers' protests against the India-U.S. trade deal, saying it would meet the same fate as the three farm laws that the Centre had to withdraw in 2021.

Speaking on the Motion of Thanks to President Droupadi Murmu for her Address to the joint session of Parliament, Mr. Kharge said the government would be forced to roll back the deal if it went ahead. Leader of the House and Union Minister J.P. Nadda countered the charge, citing Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal's statement that the deal would benefit all sections of society.

Mr. Kharge said the trade deal would "destroy" the farmers and accused the Union government of undermining the country's agriculture sector. He said the Centre did not inform Parliament about the fact that the deal was signed.

Quoting U.S. Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins, Mr. Kharge said American farmers would benefit from the deal. "Are you working for the welfare of farmers, or are you against the farmers?" he asked.

Mr. Kharge said that the President's Address was silent on social justice, social harmony, attack on constitutional institutions, the economy, the struggles of farmers and labourers, and shortfalls in foreign policy. He said democratic institutions, including Parliament, are being neglected.

Mr. Nadda said the President's Address was not a report card but a road map of developed India.

INBRIEF

Turkish Airlines plane makes emergency landing in Kolkata

A Turkish Airlines flight from Kathmandu to Istanbul was forced to divert to Kolkata under emergency conditions after it reported failure of one of its engines. The airline in a statement said the flight landed safely in Kolkata, where it is undergoing necessary inspections. The airline arranged an alternative flight for its passengers. "The flight declared PAN PAN, an international radio distress signal, due to the right engine on fire and requested to divert to Kolkata at 1.38 p.m. with one engine failure," the Civil Aviation Ministry said in a statement.

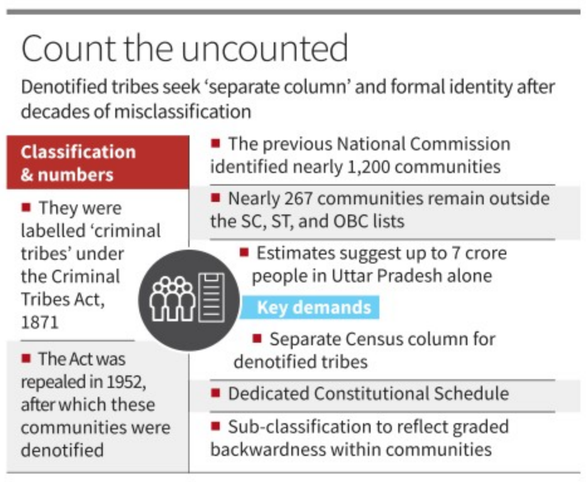
Modi to discuss ties during two-day visit to Malaysia

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will pay an official visit to Malaysia on February 7 and 8, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Wednesday. The Prime Minister would hold discussions with Anwar Ibrahim, Prime Minister of Malaysia, and representatives of the Indian community in Kuala Lumpur. The upcoming visit would be the third visit of Mr. Modi to Malaysia and the first since bilateral relations were elevated to a "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership" in August 2024. "India and Malaysia share long-standing bonds of friendship, based on historical, civilisational and cultural connections," the Ministry said. The upcoming visit would cover discussions on trade and investment, defence, security and maritime cooperation, education, and tourism.

Denotified tribes seek constitutional recognition, separate Census entry

Denotified tribes, nomadic tribes, semi-nomadic tribes seek 'separate column' in 2027 caste census, claiming they have been politically misclassified among SC, ST, OBC groups; they want sub-classification to highlight backwardness within grouping

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI



Denotified tribes, nomadic tribes, and semi-nomadic tribes across the country are coming together to push for a "separate column" for themselves in Census 2027 . Their demand is for constitutional recognition of the denotified tribes in a Schedule, on a par with the existing classifications of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC/STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs).

In February 2027, India will conduct a caste enumeration for the first time since 1931. Five years after that 1931 Census, the origins of the Scheduled Castes list came into being in the form of the Government of India (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1936.

Half a century earlier, in 1871, a colonial law had classified entire communities, particularly nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes, as "criminals". After the law was repealed in 1952, these groups came to be known as "denotified" tribes.

The Social Justice Ministry has now recommended to the Office of the Registrar-General of India that these denotified, nomadic, and semi-nomadic tribes be included in the Census. The Office of the RGI has agreed to include them in next year's caste enumeration exercise, Ministry officials assured community leaders in North India in a virtual meeting on January 30.

'Separate column'

"But we have no idea how they will do this," B.K. Lodhi, a community organiser in Uttar Pradesh who was at the meeting, told *The Hindu*. "If we are not counted in a separate column, a separate code, in the Census forms, we will be lost once again," said Balak Ram Sansi, 63, a Karnal-based organiser with the All India Denotified Nomadic Tribes Development Council.

Even as leaders from denotified, nomadic, and semi-nomadic communities across Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, and other parts of North India are fighting to have their own Schedule, some leaders have started to stress the importance of recognising "graded backwardness" within this grouping as well.

They want the demand for sub-classification to go hand in hand with that for a separate Schedule. These leaders, like Dr. Lodhi, are drawing their arguments from an August 2024 judgment, in which the Supreme Court paved the way for sub-classification of SCs and STs.

Denotified tribes

The Criminal Tribes Act was first enacted in 1871 and then amended in 1924, before being officially repealed on August 31, 1952. The 1871 Act said it was for the "registration, surveillance and control of certain criminal tribes and eunuchs", describing "criminal tribes" as "tribe, gang, or class of persons" that are "addicted" to committing non-bailable offences. "These communities were among the first to confront the British and sustained the struggle. That is why the colonial government classified us as 'criminal tribes'," Mr. Sansi said.

The previous National Commission for Denotified Tribes, headed by Bhiku Ramji Idate, identified 1,200 such tribes, most of which have been assimilated in the SC, ST, or OBC classifications over the past seven decades. In its 2017 report, however, the Idate Commission listed 267 DNT communities that have not been classified as such. Dr. Lodhi, who served as Deputy Secretary and Director (Research) to the Idate Commission, said, "Most of the DNTs have been amalgamated in the SC, ST, OBC lists and they are not able to compete in these categories because of how marginalised they are." Mr. Sansi said it was "politics" that led to the DNT communities being "misclassified".

No caste certificates

Despite schemes for DNTs run by both the State and the Centre, such as the SEED scheme, only a "miniscule" percentage of people are getting benefits, mainly because governments are not willing to issue DNT certificates, the leaders said.

The Social Justice Ministry has only spent ₹69.3 crore on the SEED scheme in the past five years (as of December 2025), compared to the planned expenditure of ₹200 crore. "The reason for this is that no State is issuing proper DNT community certificates for us despite reminders from the Centre," Dr. Lodhi said.

Cooperative cab service Bharat Taxi's launch today

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Minister for Home Affairs and Cooperation Amit Shah will launch India's first cooperative-based ride-hailing platform, Bharat Taxi, on Thursday.

Bharat Taxi has been conceptualised as a transformative initiative in the mobility sector, placing drivers – referred to as *sarathis* (charioteers) – at the centre of ownership, operations, and value creation, thereby freeing them from exploitative aggregator-based models, a statement by the Cooperation Ministry said. During the programme, the top six performing *sarathis* will be honoured for their outstanding contributions .

Each honoured *sarathi* will be provided with a personal accident insurance cover of ₹5 lakh and family health insurance cover of ₹5 lakh, reflecting Bharat Taxi's commitment to driver welfare and long-term social security, the Ministry said. On the occasion, nine memoranda of understanding (MoUs) will be exchanged with key public and private stakeholders.

Bharat Taxi aims to expand to all States and cities across the country in the next two years.

A sociologist with rigorous scholarship who laid emphasis on importance of fieldwork

Nistula Hebbar
NEW DELHI

ANDRE BETEILLE (1934-2026)

Renowned Indian sociologist and writer Andre Beteille died from age-related illness at his residence in New Delhi on Tuesday. He was 91.

The passing away of Professor Beteille, one of India's foremost scholars, brought forth a rush of tributes from colleagues and former students, amid a realisation that it also marks the passing of a particular way of scholarship and of a practitioner of teaching as a vocation.

Anyone entering the Delhi School of Economics (DSE) for a Master's degree in sociology, for which the institution is justly famous, could not help but be aware of the village of Sripuram in Thanjavur district of Tamil Nadu, the site of Professor Beteille's fieldwork for his work *Caste, Class and Power* on agrarian relations and shifting power structures in India. It was a work that perhaps gave many graduate students, hailing from different strands of social classes, a taste of not just the complexity but also the structural nature of social categories and how they interact.

One entered "D'School", as the DSE is referred to, with an awareness of Professor Beteille's rigorous scholarship and his emphasis on the importance of fieldwork; once there, his commitment to teaching – mercifully jargon-free and disciplined – was the next experience with him.

Born in Chandannagar, West Bengal, in 1934 to a French father and Bengali mother, he could read three languages fluently – English, French, and Bengali. The books and papers that he wrote, including *Inequality and Social Change*, *Studies in Agrarian Social Structure* and Society and *Politics in India: Essays in a Comparative Perspective*, attest to his rigorous scholarship.

It is as a teacher, however, that his legions of students remember him. Speaking to *The Hindu*, his former colleague Virginius Xaxa said he too acknowledges Professor Beteille as an "undeclared mentor" to him, in guiding him, through affable nudges (the two had offices next to each other on the DSE campus) towards the study of tribal societies in India, for which Professor Xaxa is known for. "He was a teacher par excellence, not just in terms of style and canvas of his knowledge, but also as an ethical person in terms of responsibility to students," he said.

Students who studied under him recall that regardless of strikes or other disruptions, he would, as was his wont, turn up at the DSE.

Janaki Abraham, who had been a student of Professor Beteille and is now teaching at the DSE, said teaching schedules remained inviolate for him. "He would always say, please attend conferences during holidays, not during semester. As a teacher, he would interact a lot with students and was accessible to us," she said.

His scholarly work is still part of academic curricula in courses on Indian sociology.

While he was accorded the Padma Bhushan in 2005 for his contributions to literature and education, his legions of students give a more lasting account of his career.

Indian cities could see far higher temperature rise than projected, says study

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Climate models may be underestimating – by anything from half to two degrees – how much hotter India's non-metropolitan cities can get from global warming relative to rural areas, according to a study published on Wednesday.

The researchers, from the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom, analysed how temperatures would rise in 104 "medium-sized" cities in tropical and sub-tropical regions under a 2 degrees Celsius warming scenario, the emissions path that the globe is currently on. Rather than asking how hot regions become on average, the study asks a different question: how much faster do cities warm than their surrounding countryside?

Study includes 18 Indian cities, and finds that all of them warm faster than nearby rural areas.

The study found that in Patiala, Punjab, land surface temperatures could rise at double the rate of warming projected by global climate models in comparison to its surrounding rural region – an extreme "outlier." This means that if the models used in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's assessments predict a 2 degrees Celsius temperature rise in Patiala, the rise would actually be 4 degrees Celsius when urban heat-island effects are accounted for. An extra 2 degrees Celsius rise in temperature can have significant implications for susceptibility to heat strokes, water availability, and public expenditure on cooling.

Urban heat-island effect

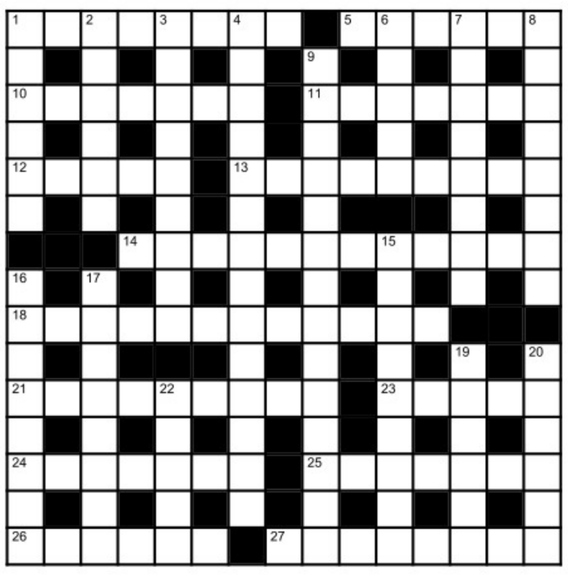
The study includes 18 Indian cities, and finds that all of them warm faster than nearby rural areas. On average, Indian cities experience about 45% more warming than what Earth System Models (ESMs) project for the broader region. Urban heat-island effect is the tendency for cities to be hotter than nearby rural land.

TH CROSSWORD + 14709

(set by Hypatia)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://thehindu.com/crosswords*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Bounce back and run moving two steps ahead in one's network? (8)
5 Scatters bouquets (6)
10 Casually pick American or Japanese fish (3,4)
11 Italian dish oddly thrown out from trains to station (7)
12 On retirement British Indian owns title (5)
13 Felt fur of bats is pretty tough (9)
14 Small girl with singer performing in blue robe (8,4)
18 Good run for popular ride in a village mela, say (5-2-5)
21 Found incomplete URL changes essentially goof up to cause conflict (3,4,2)
23 Relating to bones usually located near arm's radius, primarily (5)
24 Best and worst grades on impartial school projects (7)
25 Beast managed lying about wife, partly not fully (7)
26 Regularly selected shoe from Men's premium brand (6)
27 Combed Tim, especially around sleeping hours (8)

Down

1 Sportingly unconventional anorak is heavily hooded (6)
2 Saw bag leaving New England initially (6)
3 Cold barren ground rarely cleared out for fruit (9)
4 Dull as an algebra class having no equations? (14)
6 Sitter of a puzzle (5)
7 Fine old cat struggling to lift tail up in unexpected disaster (3,2,3)
8 Dull student in reasonable fast track? Just the opposite (4,4)
9 Having turned, in effect, car crashing and speeding, for instance (7,7)
15 Made U-turn right inside secure defence tower (3,6)
16 Article of flower put up in holy shrine (8)
17 Coaches drop international football official returning to shift (8)
19 Basically any nation's traditional hymn expressed musically! (6)
20 Registers after time and irritates (6)
22 Think of love and ache (5)

SUDOKU

	7	6	9	4				8
	5		1			9	4	2
		7			4		8	
5								7
	8		5			1		
9	3	1			5		6	
4				1	6	3	5	

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

K	M	S	P	L				S
C	A	T	E	R	P	I	L	L
A	R		T	H	Y	N		A
O	A	U	B	I	A	G	E	D
O	F	T	E	N	A	R	M	Y
N	E	C	D	L	A	T	R	I
P	S	C	A	T	H	E	D	R
A	L	O	O	U	E	E	H	O
L	L	O	W	D	E	B	A	T
E	I	E	P	T	R	P	H	A
S	E	D	O	U	T	A	S	K
E	D	E	H	D	R	B	A	U
R	G	E	I	S	S	U	E	P
U	S	H	O	D	N	U	G	I
U	Z	I	P	A	G	R	I	C
U	L	T	U	R	E	C	S	T
M	Y	E						

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

8	5	7	6	1	3	9	2	4
1	6	3	4	9	2	5	8	7
2	4	9	5	8	7	1	3	6
4	3	5	9	6	1	2	7	8
6	7	8	3	2	5	4	1	9
9	1	2	7	4	8	3	6	5
5	8	6	1	3	4	7	9	2
7	9	1	2	5	6	8	4	3
3	2	4	8	7	9	6	5	1

FAITH

Sikkal Singaravelan

The town of Sikkal is located on the road from Nagapattinam to Thiruvarur. Although everyone refers to the temple here as the Sikkal Murugan temple, it is in fact a Siva temple. It was built by King Kochenganaan. Lord Siva here is known as Navaneetheswarar. He is also called *Vennai Perumal*. Ambal in this temple is known as *Vel Nedumkanni*. Murugan in this temple goes by the name of Singaravelan, said Desa Mangayarkkarasi in a discourse.

When Murugan was about to leave Kailasa to fight Sooran, He had the following 11 weapons: sword, goad, pestle, vajra, flag, bow, arrow, bell, lotus, staff and axe. The twelfth hand held no weapon. The celestials were afraid that Murugan might assume the *abhaya* or *varada* mudra in this hand. The *abhaya* hasta offers protection. The *varada* hasta gives boons. They were concerned that Murugan might adopt one of these mudras, in which case, He might either pardon the asuras or even go to the extent of giving them boons. But Siva prepared a special weapon for the twelfth hand. He gathered together all the saktis in the world, and made a spear. He then gave this spear (*vel*) to Parvati, and asked Her to bless it and give it to Murugan. Parvati Devi infused the spear with Her sakti, and this, of course, is the main sakti in the spear. She then handed over the *vel* to Murugan. This handing over of the *vel* took place in Sikkal. Even today, the spear giving is celebrated in a grand manner in the Sikkal temple. The idol of Murugan is seen sweating during the handing over of the spear. The priest keeps wiping the sweat that pours from His forehead. Murugan's excitement at going out to fight causes the sweating.

INBRIEF

IndiGo suspends flights to Copenhagen, trims U.K. trips

IndiGo has suspended flights to Copenhagen and reduced services to London and Manchester, as airlines are being forced to take longer detours to avoid Iranian airspace, increasing flight times and fuel consumption. Its Delhi-Manchester flights would also be reduced from five flights per week to three flights in a staggered manner from February 7. Its Delhi-London flights will also come down to four weekly flights from five per week from February 9.

Tata Power profit rises marginally to ₹1,194 cr. in Q3

Tata Power on Wednesday posted a marginal rise in consolidated net profit to ₹1,194 crore in the December quarter owing to lower revenues. It had posted a consolidated profit of ₹1,188 crore during the quarter, according to a filing. Total income trimmed to ₹14,269.08 crore in the third quarter of the current fiscal year from ₹15,793.43 crore in the year-ago period, registering a fall of around 10%. Expenses stood at ₹13,465.06 crore as against ₹14,249.35 crore in Q3 FY25. PTI

U.S. FDA issues warning letter to Cohance's FDF facility

U.S. Food and Drug Administration has issued a warning letter to Cohance Lifesciences' finished dosage formulations manufacturing facility (FDF Unit-I) in Hyderabad. The warning letter is in continuation of the official action indicated (OAI) classification, of the facility, by the U.S. FDA earlier. The regulator had conducted a Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) inspection in August and on completion issued a Form 483 with six observations.

Willingness to pay up may not save bank scam colluders: SC

SC flays delay in filing case, directs ED to constitute SIT; calls for 'fair, dispassionate' probe into the 'nexus, connivance, conspiracy, collusion'

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

In the dock: The court made the observation in the case linked to Anil Dhirubhai Ambani Group and promoter Anil Ambani. REUTERS

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said even a willingness to pay up may not save those involved in an alleged bank scam linked to the Anil Dhirubhai Ambani Group (ADAG) and its promoter Anil Ambani from criminal prosecution, if the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) were able to unearth a deliberate intention to "siphon off" public funds.

A three-judge Bench headed by the Chief Justice of India Surya Kant directed the ED to constitute a Special Investigation Team (SIT) of senior officers to investigate the scam, while ordering the CBI to conduct a "fair, dispassionate" probe into the "nexus, connivance, conspiracy, collusion" among bank officials, authorities, and the managements of the companies.

"If there was an intention to siphon public funds from the very beginning, such kind of offences cannot be compounded just because you are willing to pay," Chief Justice of India Kant, heading a three-judge Bench, addressed senior advocates Mukul Rohatgi and Shyam Divan, appearing for Mr. Ambani and the ADAG, respectively.

The court was responding to a suggestion made by Mr. Rohatgi that a committee could be formed, which could look into the amount due to the banks.

"I am not opposing a SIT, but the gentleman could pay rather than face prosecution... They are saying there was siphoning of money. I am denying the allegation," the senior counsel offered.

Mr. Divan said the amounts "bandied about" in the court were not true. He sought, and was given time, to file a reply.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the CBI and the ED, said the forensic auditor had pointed to the siphoning of approximately ₹40,000 crore of public money.

It was "not possible to compound" if the acts involved misappropriation of public funds, Mr. Mehta said.

The top law officer said the acts in question involved the giving of "forged bank guarantees".

"In the forensic report, it is shown money was taken from one bank to pay another," Mr. Mehta submitted.

Advocates Prashant Bhushan and Neha Rathi, appearing for petitioner E.A.S. Sarma, who has sought the constitution of an SIT and a comprehensive investigation into what he termed as "one of the biggest financial frauds in the country", flagged the possibility of Mr. Ambani fleeing the country.

Taking strong objection to Mr. Bhushan's submissions, Mr. Rohatgi said that he was giving a statement that Mr. Ambani had no such intentions and would remain in the country.

The BSE IT index tumbled 5.49% to 35,109.51. REUTERS

IT stocks slump on Anthropic tool launch

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Shares of Infosys plunged 7.19%, TCS tanked 6.95%, LTIMindtree dropped 5.51% on the BSE

IT stocks tumbled on Wednesday, with Infosys slumping over 7%, in-line with heavy sell-off in tech companies in the U.S.

Shares of Infosys plunged 7.19%, Tata Consultancy Services tanked 6.95 %, LTIMindtree dropped 5.51%, and Hexaware Technologies tumbled 4.98% on the BSE.

The stock of Persistent Systems edged lower by 4.69%, HCL Technologies declined 4.22 %, Tech Mahindra lost 4.12%, and Wipro fell by 3.73%.

The combined market valuation of these firms eroded ₹1.66 lakh crore.

The BSE IT index tumbled 5.49% to 35,109.51.

"IT stocks faced sharp selling pressure, tracking weakness in global technology shares.

"Sentiment in the sector deteriorated after AI startup Anthropic unveiled an end-to-end workflow automation productivity tool, rekindling concerns that rapid advances in AI could disrupt traditional software business models and weigh on industry-wide profitability," Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said.

In the U.S. market, the Nasdaq Composite index tumbled 1.43% on Tuesday.

IT stocks were the biggest drag for the markets. After a remarkable rally in the previous trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 78.56 points, or 0.09%, higher at 83,817.69.

The 50-share NSE Nifty went up 48.45 points or 0.19 % to settle at 25,776.

"Overall upside remained limited due to weakness in IT stocks amid concerns over reduced demand for traditional outsourcing following Anthropic's introduction of new AI-driven automation tools," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Ltd, said.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	WEDNESDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	83,818	0.09
US Dollar	90.47	-0.16
Gold	1,65,100	4.69
Brent oil	67.44	1.10

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	2228.20	25.60
Adani Ports	1567.90	37.10
Apollo Hosp	7116.00	27.50
Asian Paints	2452.70	26.70
Axis Bank	1338.70	-17.50
Bajaj Auto	9639.00	43.50
Bajaj Finserv	2019.60	6.90
Bajaj Finance	963.30	-1.10
Bharat Elec	439.20	0.25
Bharti Airtel	2025.80	28.50
Cipla	1326.70	3.90
Coal India	434.90	5.50
Dr Reddys Lab	1240.20	4.80
Hindustan Unilever	40.20	DE*
Eicher Motors	7277.50	62.50
Eternal Ltd.	294.15	14.35
Grasim Ind	2844.90	36.00
HCL Tech	1621.80	-73.50
HDFC Bank	953.10	4.40
HDFC Life	722.50	2.35
Hindalco	964.95	9.65
Hind Unilever	2371.00	2.40
ICICI Bank	1408.40	18.70
IntGlobeAvi	4960.70	14.50
Infosys	1535.80	-120.20
ITC	313.85	-2.80
Jio Financial Services Ltd.	268.00	4.10
JSW Steel	1228.20	-1.20
Kotak Bank	412.35	-3.45
L&T	4087.10	48.30
M&M	3574.00	46.10
Maruti Suzuki	15071.00	289.00
Max Healthcare	1025.45	21.95
NestleIndia	1303.20	-4.80
NTPC	367.25	8.70
ONGC	266.95	9.95
PowerGrid Corp	289.40	6.20
Reliance Ind	1456.80	19.70
SBI Life	2041.70	39.60
State Bank	1068.20	4.00
Shriram Finance Ltd.	998.80	-1.60
Sun Pharma	1704.40	2.30
TataConsumerProduct	1153.00	-2.40
Tata Steel	195.40	2.47
TCS	2999.10	-226.20
Tech Mahindra	1645.30	-71.20
Titan	4144.00	75.40
Tata Motors PV	375.45	3.40
Trent Ltd.	4012.60	189.80
UltraTech Cement	12806.00	216.00
Wipro	233.34	-9.35

DE: Demerged Entity

Zydus gets nod for diabetes drug

Zydus Lifesciences has received tentative approval from the U.S. FDA for diabetes drug Dapagliflozin Tablets, 5 mg and 10 mg, a generic of AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals Farxiga Tablets, 5 mg and 10 mg.

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS - TIRUPATI
HEALTH OFFICE, TTD, TIRUMALA. **e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE**

Health Office, TTD, Tirumala is inviting online bids in QCBS method from the suppliers for Supply of Manpower -197 (Unskilled -173, Skilled-24) for Sanitation maintenance and Mechanized cleaning in MTVAC, Vakulamatha Kitchen and PAC-IV,, TTD, Tirumala. Date of upload of Tender document **05/02/2026** and last date of submission of Tender document **21/02/2026**. For tender document log on to the web site **http://www.tirumala.org** and **http://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in**. For further details contact Phone Nos:**0877-2263686 & 9866132451** and mail ID:**ttdhealthoffice@gmail.com** during office working hours.

TTD-40021/10/2025-PRO SEC(Adv.No.386) Date:04-02-2026 **EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY
E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tender No. 05/2025-26/SE/PPD/KCH

Construction of 5 MLD Capacity STP with Co treatment units at Elamkulam for Kochi Corporation under AMRUT 2.0. [Design, Construction and Commissioning of 5 MLD capacity STP with Co treatment based on MBBR Technology inclusive of all Mechanical and Electrical components followed by Operation and maintenance (O&M) for 5 years] Cost of Tender form:Rs. 19,518/- (inclusive of GST) ; EMD:Rs. 500,000/- ;
Date and time of Opening Tender: 10/03/2026 3.30 pm ; Last date of receipt of tender: 09/03/2026 3.00 pm ;
Phone:8547638502 ; E-mail- seppdregionkochi@gmail.com

Sd/-, Superintending Engineer, PPDIU & Sewerage Circle, KWA, Kochi - 11

TRANSMISSION CORPORATION OF ANDHRA PRADESH LIMITED
(A Government of Andhra Pradesh Undertaking & An ISO 27001-2022 Certified Company)
e-Procurement TENDER NOTICE

The APTRANSCO invites bids online for **Spec No.** PMMTC2-e-04 /2026, **Work :** "Supply and Erection/Stringing and commissioning of 48F OPGW cable at the bottom cross-arm level of the tower for five critical line sections in the jurisdiction of 400KVSS Kalapaka and 220kv VSS region in Visakhapatnam district", **Date & Time of availability of Tender: 05.02.2026 at 11:00 AM, Web: http://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in.**

RO No: GMCC/APTRANSCO/34/26 Sd/- CHIEF ENGINEER Telecom & IT

CSIR – INDIAN INSTITUTE OF CHEMICAL BIOLOGY
4, Raja SC Mullick Road, Jadavpur, Kolkata - 700032

SHORT PROPOSAL NOTICE

1) Name of work: Empanelment of advertising agencies for CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Biology, Kolkata; 2) E-Tender No. 2026_CSIR_264439_1; 3) Publication date in C.P.P. portal —05.02.2026; 4) For further details please visit https://www.iicb.res.in, and https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app.

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD
(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala)
Corporate Identification Number (CIN): U40109PB2010SGC033813;
website: www.pspcl.in, e-tendering portal: https://eproc.punjab.gov.in
Contact No. 96461-19383, 96461-11036

Tender Enquiry No. QQ-267/PO-C

Chief Purchase Office/MM, Central Purchase Organization, PSPCL, 2nd Floor Multistorey Building, The Mall Road, Patiala, invites E-Tender of 2550 KM ACSR Raccoon, Nominal Aluminium area 80 mm² bearing ISI/PQM Mark conforming to IS:398 Part-II 2025 (with Latest amendments, if any) and PSPCL specification QQ-267.

For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in** from **05.02.2026**.

Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in**

C 198/26 **1079/12/2025-26/7845**

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, P.W.D., CIRCLE-JHALAWAR
Room No.-158, Ground Floor (Public Works Department), Mini Secretariat, Jhalawar
E-mail:- piu_jhalawar@rediffmail.com/sejwar.pwd@rajasthan.gov.in
Phone No. :- 07432-233336

S. No. :- 1185 Date:- 24-01-2026

NIT No. 13/2025-26
Notice Inviting Bid
NIB No. PWD2526A5349

Bids for **Construction of 2 Nos. Building & 3 Nos. Road Repair in Dist. Jhalawar** are invited from interested bidders **upto 6.00 PM**, **Dated 25.02.2026.** Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal **(http://erpoc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.raj.nic.in)** of the Rajasthan and **http://pwd.rajasthan.gov.in website**. The approximate value of the procurement is **Rs. 1717.87 Lacs**.

S.No.	UBN No.	S.No.	UBN No.	S.No.	UBN No.
1	PWD2526WLOB21722	2	PWD2526WLOB21723	3	PWD2526WLOB21724
4	PWD2526WLOB21725	5	PWD2526WLOB21726		

(Mukesh Chand Meena)
Superintending Engineer
Public Works Department
Circle-Jhalawar

DIPR/C/1717/2026

कार्यालय नगर निगम जयपुर
(सांगानेर स्टेडियम वाली रोड, गर्ल्स स्कूल के पास, सांगानेर जयपुर)
E-mail :- eesanganerzone01@gmail.com

क्रमांक :– जसअ / 2025 / 471 दिनांक: 02.02.2026

निविदा सूचना संख्या 240–247/2025–26

केन्द्र एवं राज्य सरकार के सभी विभागों में पंजीकृत संवेदकों एवं नगर निगम जयपुर के पंजीकृत निविदादाताओं से बिड अधि. अभि. (सांगानेर जोन) से संबंधित विकास कार्य की निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। कार्य की अनुमानित लागत, टेण्डर बेचे जाने तथा प्राप्त करने की तारीख, टेण्डर शर्तें आदि सम्पूर्ण विवरण वेबसाईट **http://sppp.raj.nic.in** & **www.jaipurmc.org** पर देखी जा सकती है। स्टेट पब्लिक प्रोक्योरमेंट पोर्टल का Unique Bid Number **JMC2526WSOB02660** से **JMC2526WSOB02666, JMC2526WSOB02675** है।

अधिशाषी अभियंता
सांगानेर जोन
नगर निगम जयपुर

राज.संवाद / सी / 25 / 19075

TAMIL NADU NEWSPRINT AND PAPERS LIMITED
Kagithapuram - 639 136. Karur Dist. Tamil Nadu.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Tender No.	Material Description	Due date
252613 007233	Steaming (Non-Coking) Coal in Bulk (Imported) with 4200 GAR of Indonesian origin.	17.02.2026
252623 004146	Bleached Softwood Kraft Pulp (BSKP) for Unit - II.	17.02.2026

Corrigendum if any will be issued in TNPL Website and NIC Portal only. For further details, please visit websites : **www.tnpl.com / https://tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app**

DIPR/731/Tender/2026 *TNPL - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper*

भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, अंतरिक्ष विभाग / DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
विक्रम साराभाई अंतरिक्ष केंद्र / VIKRAM SARABHAI SPACE CENTRE
निर्माण एवं अनुरक्षण ग्रुप / CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP
तिरुवनंतपुरम / THIRUVANANTHAPURAM – 22 / (फोन नं. / Ph. No. 0471 – 2564568 / 5669 / 4537)

दिनांक/Dated : 04-02-2026

ई-निविदा आमंत्रित करते हुए संक्षिप्त सूचना / BRIEF NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

भारत के राष्ट्रपति की ओर से निम्नलिखित कार्यों के लिए ई-टेंडरिंग द्वारा ऑनलाइन मद-दर निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। On behalf of the President of India, online item-rate tenders are invited through E-tendering for the following works.

1. आरपीपी, वीएसएससी, तुंबा में पीएसओएम एक्सएल/गगनयान हार्डवेयर प्रहस्तन सुविधा के लिए भवन का निर्माण (सिविल तथा पीएच कार्य) / Construction of building for PSOM XL/Gaganyaan Hardware handling facility at RPP, VSSC, Thumba (Civil and PH works) / **NIT No. VSSC/CMG/C01/29/2025-26 Dt. 04.02.2026 (पी.ए.सी./P.A.C: ₹ 365.38 लाख/Lakhs)**

डाउनलोड करने की अवधि / Period for downloading : दिनांक 05.02.2026, 16.00 बजे/hrs. से/to दिनांक 18.02.2026, 23.00 बजे/hrs.

ई-निविदा की अवधि बढ़ाना / EXTENSION E-TENDER

1. टर्ल्स, वीएसएससी, तुंबा में जल उपचार संयंत्र के लिए 10 मी. व्यास की सादा पानी के कुंड का निर्माण (सिविल कार्य) / Construction of 10m dia. Raw Water Well for Water Treatment Plant at TERLS, VSSC, Thumba (Civil works)/ **NIT No. VSSC/CMG/C01/25/2025-26 Dt. 08.01.2026 (पी.ए.सी./P.A.C: ₹ 72.35 लाख/Lakhs)**
2. वट्टीयुरकावु परिसर में अग्निशमन लाइनों का संवर्धन (सिविल कार्य) / Augmentation of firefighting lines in Vattiyoorkavu Campus (Civil works) / **NIT No. VSSC/CMG/C01/26/2025-26 Dt. 08.01.2026 (पी.ए.सी./P.A.C: ₹ 220.16 लाख/Lakhs)**
3. आरएफएफ, वीएसएससी में एमएमई के लिए सपाट तथा बहिर्वेधित धात्विक उत्पादों के भंडारण हेतु प्रस्तावित पूर्व व्यवस्थित भवन के लिए विद्युत कार्य / Electrical works in proposed Pre Engineered Building for storage of Flat and Extruded Metallic Products for MME at RFF, VSSC / **NIT No. VSSC/CMG/E01/31/2025-26 Dt. 08.01.2026 (पी.ए.सी./P.A.C: ₹ 25.61 लाख/Lakhs)**

डाउनलोड करने की अवधि / Period for downloading : दिनांक 11.02.2026, 23.00 बजे तक बढ़ाए गए / Extended upto 23:00 hrs. on 11.02.2026

इच्छुक निविदाकार ब्यौरों के लिए www.tenderwizard.in/isro या www.isro.gov.in देखें। Interested tenderers may visit www.tenderwizard.in/isro or www.isro.gov.in for details.

Sd/- प्रधान, सीएमजी, वीएसएससी / Head, CMG, VSSC

CWRDM e-Tender Notice
E-Tenders are invited for Supply and Installation of High Precision DGPS
Tender ID:
2026_KCSTE_829854_1
For details:
www.etenders.kerala.gov.in
Last Date: **16.02.2026, 5.00pm**

SRI BHRAMARAMBA MALLIKARJUNA SWAMYVARLA DEVASTHANAM
SRISAILAM - 518101, NANDYAL DIST., A.P.

e-procurement tender- Cum-e-auction Notification - 3rd Call

Rc.No.C2/E-436386/2025 **Dated: 03.02.2026.**

E-Tender & e-Auction for collection of Human Hair right for **2 years** i.e for the period from **Dt: 27.12.2025** i.e. existing human hair collecting the Devasthanam i.e. from **27.12.2025** to date of handover possession to **26.12.2026** another one year i.e. **27.12.2026** to **26.12.2027** to enhancement **10%** of Bid amount with continued e-auction will be conducted.

Interested persons for any information to visit web sites:
www.apeprocurement.gov.in, www.eauctionsupport-apts.ap.gov.in & https://konugolu.ap.gov.in
site login starts from Dt: 06-02-2026.

Note: for further information please contact leases section in office timings: **Contact Numbers: 7032070215, 9441096182 & 6300057600.**

sd/- M.SREENIVASA RAO, Special Grade Deputy Collector & Executive Officer.

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD
(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office,The Mall, Patiala)
Corporate Identification Number (CIN). U40109PB2010SGC033813;
Website: www.pspcl.in; e-tendering portal: https://eproc.punjab.gov.in
Contact No.: 96461-19383, 96461-11036

Tender Enquiry No. QQ-266/2025-26/PO-C

Chief Purchase Officer/MM, Central Purchase Organization, PSPCL, 2nd Floor, Multistorey Building, The Mall Road, Patiala, invites E-tender of **8400 Km** ACSR Weasel, Nominal Aluminium area 30 mm² bearing ISI/PQM Mark conforming to IS:398 Part-II 2025 (with Latest amendments, if any) and PSPCL specification QQ-266.

For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in** from **04.02.2026**.

Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in**

C 197/26 **1079/12/2025-26/7844**

THE HUTTI GOLD MINES COMPANY LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Hutti - 584 115, Raichur Dist., Karnataka State. Ph: (08537)276339/275463
e-Mail: material276339@gmail.com website: www.huttigold.karnataka.gov.in

TENDER NOTIFICATION NO.33/25-26 Dt: 05.02.2026
(Through KPP Portal only)

Tender is invited by "The I/c. Dy. General Manager (Materials)" for the following Tenders as detailed below.

Sl. No.	Description	EMD in Rs.
1	Supply of 125 mm forged steel grinding media balls. **HGML/2024-25/IND0314/CALL-2.**	12,15,000/-
2	Supply of 65 mm forged steel grinding media balls. **HGML/2024-25/IND0313/CALL-2.**	12,15,000/-
3	Providing 60 Persons Semi Skilled Below Ground Labours to Uti & Hira Buddinni Gold Mine of Hutti Gold Mines Co. Ltd. **HGML/2025-26/SE0084**	3,73,000/-

Calendar of events: (1) Pre-Bid Meetings (Zoom):**12.02.2026 for Sl.No.1 & 2 at 10.30 AM and for Sl.No.3 at 11.00 A.M. (2)** Last date for receipt of tender: **06.03.2026 at 4.00 P.M. (3)** Opening of Technical Bid on**: 09.03.2026 at 10.00 A.M.**

For further details interested bidders are advised to log on to website **https://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** or contact the office of undersigned during working hours. For participating in the above tender bidder needs to be registered in KPPP portal.

Sd/- The I/c Deputy General Manager (Materials)

LEADING GOLD PRODUCER IN INDIA

Government of Tamil Nadu
Highways Department
Superintending Engineer (H)
Chennai Metropolitan Development Plan Circle,
Saidapet, Chennai - 15

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE

Tender Notice No: 15/2025-26/CMDP/DO/dated.03.02.2026
(Online only)

For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu Item rate tender under Two cover system through online only for Division III work of **"Construction of Road Over Bridge at Km 75/6 of Chennai – Tiruttani – Renigunda Road (SHU 148) in addition to existing two lane Road Over Bridge" will be received upto 23.02.2026, 11.00 Hours** by the Superintending Engineer (H), Chennai Metropolitan Development Plan Circle, Saidapet, Chennai -15

Detailed Scope of work, approximate value, EMD, availability of tender document and all other details are available from **06.02.2026** onwards in the Government website **https://www.tntenders.gov.in.** If any Changes / Corrections / Amendments etc to the tender, it will be published in the above Government website only.

Superintending Engineer (H)
CMDP Circle,
Saidapet, Chennai -15.

DIPR/716/Tender/2026

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU
HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT
PROJECTS CIRCLE, CHENNAI - 16

TENDER NOTICE

Tender Notice No.09/ 2025-2026/SDO/ Dated: 03.02.2026

For and on behalf of Governor of Tamil Nadu an **Item Rate tender** through online only will be received upto **23.02.2026, 14.00 hours** by the **Superintending Engineer (H) Projects Circle, Chennai** for **One Road Over Bridge work** in respect of **Vellore (H) Projects Division** under Announcements made by the Hon'ble Minister (Highways and Minor Ports) **During the Budget Session 2025–26.**

Details of Name of work, approximate value of work, EMD, availability of tender documents and all other details are available from **06.02.2026,** onwards in the Government website **https://tntenders.gov.in.** If any Changes / Corrections / Amendments etc. to the tender, it will be published on the above Government website only.

DIPR/721/TENDER/2026

SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (H), PROJECTS CIRCLE, CHENNAI-16.

ISLAMABAD

Almost 200 separatists killed after attacks in Pakistan, says official

AFP

Pakistan's security forces have killed almost 200 separatists in southwestern Balochistan province since they launched a wave of attacks over the weekend, a security official said on Wednesday, taking the overall death toll past 250. He added that at least 36 civilians and 22 security personnel were also killed. AFP

WASHINGTON

Donald Trump is turning U.S. into an authoritarian state, warns HRW

AFP

Human Rights Watch warned on Wednesday that President Donald Trump was turning the United States into an authoritarian state as democracy declines globally to its lowest ebb in four decades. Mr. Trump's return to the White House has intensified a "downward spiral" on human rights, the group said in its annual report. AFP

JOS

Gunmen kill at least 162 people in Nigeria's Kwara state in new attack

AP

Gunmen killed at least 162 people in Nigeria's Kwara state in one of the deadliest attacks in the country in recent months, a Red Cross official said on Wednesday. The attack in the west-central state came after the military recently carried out operations in the area against what it called "terrorist elements". AFP

BEIJING

Xi calls for 'mutual respect' in Trump call, issues Taiwan warning

AP

Chinese leader Xi Jinping called on Wednesday for "mutual respect" in strengthening relations with the United States, warning President Donald Trump in a phone call to use "caution" when selling arms to Taiwan, Beijing's state media reported. Mr. Xi also expressed the hope that bilateral issues could be resolved amicably. AFP

U.S., Iran confirm talks amid flare-up over drone downing

Tehran says it is ready to hold talks with U.S.; White House confirms Steve Witkoff would meet Iranian officials later this week; U.S. military said it shot down an Iranian drone in the Arabian Sea

Stanly Johny

An anti-U.S. billboard displayed on a building in Tehran's Valiasr Square on Wednesday. AFP

Iran's Foreign Ministry on Wednesday said preparations were completed for holding talks with the U.S. in the coming days, hours after the U.S. military said it had shot down an Iranian drone that approached its aircraft carrier *USS Abraham Lincoln* in the Arabian Sea. U.S. President Donald Trump also said in Washington that his administration is "negotiating" with Tehran.

"Planning [for the talks] has already been carried out and that details on the venue will be announced once finalised," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei said on Wednesday, according to state-owned *Press TV*.

Mr. Trump, while speaking to presspersons at the White House on Tuesday, said: "[The talks] are all over. But they are negotiating. They'd like to do something, and we'll see if something is going to be done... They had a chance to do something a while ago, and it didn't work out, and we did (Operation) Midnight Hammer," he said, referring to the U.S. strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities in June 2025. "I don't think they want that happening again, but they would like to negotiate."

White House spokesperson Karoline Leavitt said Mr. Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff is set to have talks with Iranian officials later this week.

While the U.S., along with threats and troop mobilisation, signalled a readiness for diplomacy, Iran reciprocated with diplomatic engagement coupled with warnings that any attack could trigger a regional war. Iran conducted live-fire military drills in the Strait of Hormuz, a critical chokepoint between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman which opens into the Arabian Sea.

On February 3, the U.S. Central Command said, an Iranian Shahed-139 drone "unnecessarily manoeuvred" towards *USS Abraham Lincoln*, which was sailing about 800 km from Iran's Southern coast. An F-35C fighter from the *Lincoln* shot the drone down, said Capt. Tim Hawkins, spokesperson for the U.S. Central Command.

In a separate incident, two Iranian boats, accompanied by a Mohajer surveillance drone, tried to seize a U.S.-flagged tanker near the Strait of Hormuz. A U.S. guided missile destroyer escorted *M/V Stena Imperative* to safety "with defensive air support from the U.S. Air Force," said Capt. Hawkins.

Iran's *Fars* news agency carried a report on Tuesday, saying the primary mission of the drones was "monitoring all military movements in areas adjacent to the Islamic Republic". "The Shahed-129 drone was conducting its routine and legal mission of reconnaissance, monitoring, and imaging in international waters. This is considered a standard and lawful procedure," said a report in *Tasnim*, another semi-official news agency. "The drone successfully transmitted its surveillance and reconnaissance footage to the command centre."

Nicolas Maduro's ouster, Trump's oil blockade push Cuba to the brink

NEWS ANALYSIS

Srinivasan Ramani

Two U.S. flags and a Cuban flag flutter on the roof of a tricycle in front of the Capitolio in Havana on Tuesday. AFP

In what could amount to an existential crisis for the socialist nation, Cuba is now left with just 15 to 20 days of oil at current levels of demand and domestic production, according to the data analytics firm Kpler. The crisis was triggered by the U.S. military operation in Venezuela that abducted President Nicolas Maduro. The attack followed a naval blockade under which the U.S. illegally interdicted ships carrying Venezuelan oil to countries including Cuba. The situation has been exacerbated by an executive order signed by U.S. President Donald Trump on January 29, threatening punitive tariffs on any country that sells oil to Cuba.

Cuba's dependence on oil is structural as it accounts for 83% of total power generation and oil products make up 56% of total energy consumption by industry, transport, agriculture and households. For a country that imports roughly 80% of its food, power blackouts are catastrophic as they interrupt refrigeration that is vital to preserve perishables.

The Venezuelan oil that flowed to Cuba under the oil-for-doctors scheme instituted by former President Hugo Chavez was a major lifeline for the nation. In 2022, Venezuela supplied 75% of Cuba's crude oil imports, which dropped to 58% in 2023, when Mexico emerged as a significant supplier with 31%. Venezuela still supplied an average of 46,500 barrels of oil per day to Cuba in December 2025, before it dropped to zero following Mr. Maduro's abduction.

Mexico had stepped in to fill the gap, but the January 29 order has put enormous pressure on President Claudia Sheinbaum. She initially called the halting of a planned shipment a "sovereign decision", but Mr. Trump claimed that Ms. Sheinbaum had agreed to stop oil shipments at his request, which she explicitly denied. She later said Mexico was "exploring all diplomatic avenues" to send fuel as humanitarian aid, but the threat of Mexico's crude being seized appears to have constrained her options, particularly with a key free-trade pact with the U.S. and Canada up for renegotiation this year.

Economic coercion

The current crisis is also the culmination of six decades of U.S. economic coercion. What the Cubans call the "blockade" began in 1962 following the Cuban Revolution and nationalisation of industries. The embargo was reinforced in 1992 by the Torricelli Act that prohibited foreign subsidiaries of U.S. firms from trading with Cuba. The 1996 Helms-Burton Act codified the embargo into law and extended sanctions to foreign companies doing business in Cuba. The first Trump administration redesignated Cuba as a 'State Sponsor of Terrorism' in January 2021, days before leaving office.

In the second Trump administration, U.S. policy towards Cuba is fronted by Secretary of State Marco Rubio, the son of Cuban immigrants who left Cuba in 1956. Mr. Rubio grew up immersed in Miami's Cuban émigré community, where deep hostility towards the Castro government has remained a powerful force. He has openly called for regime change in Havana.

Cuba has weathered severe crises before. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Cuba's major trading partner that had provided subsidies averaging $4.3 billion annually, the island endured what it termed the 'Special Period' through the 1990s. GDP fell by 35% between 1989 and 1993 and Cubans faced severe food shortages. The government responded with partial economic liberalisation. But these reforms have proved insufficient against the combined weight of the embargo and subsequent sanctions. The current crisis may be more severe: the Special Period eventually saw Venezuela emerge as an economic lifeline under Hugo Chavez. Today, that lifeline has been severed, and the executive order explicitly threatens any government contemplating humanitarian relief.

The January 29 order declares Cuba "an unusual and extraordinary threat" to U.S. national security, citing alleged alignment with Russia, China, Iran, Hamas, and Hezbollah. Cuba's Foreign Ministry has categorically denied accommodating terrorist groups and has offered to cooperate with the U.S. on counter-terrorism and drug trafficking. The order also accuses Cuba of "destabilis[ing] the region through migration"– an assertion that inverts cause and effect, given that Cuban migration is driven substantially by U.S. sanctions.

The Cuban government has remained defiant. President Miguel Díaz-Canel posted on X: "The harshness of these times and the brutality of the threats against Cuba will not hold us back." Meanwhile, Mr. Trump has suggested negotiations, stating: "I think we're going to make a deal with Cuba", though he offered no specifics. One outcome is certain, though. Ordinary Cubans already enduring 12-hour-plus blackouts will bear the brunt.

Israeli strikes kill 21 in Gaza, including infants

Associated Press
DEIR AL-BALAH

Israeli strikes pounded Gaza on Wednesday, killing at least 21 Palestinians, including two infants, and further rocking a fragile ceasefire deal, hospital officials said. Israel said it was responding to a militant attack on Israeli soldiers that seriously wounded one.

Deadly Israeli strikes have repeatedly punctuated the truce since it came into effect on October 10, and the escalating Palestinian toll has made many in Gaza say it feels like the war is continuing unabated. Among the Palestinians killed on Wednesday were five children, seven women and an on-duty paramedic, according to hospital officials.

Israel strongly denies accusations that it is committing genocide in Gaza.

A total of 556 Palestinians have been killed by Israel and 1,500 wounded since the ceasefire went into effect, according to Gaza health officials.

Talks with Russia 'substantive and productive', says Ukraine

Agence France-Presse
ABU DHABI

Rustem Umerov

A first day of talks between Ukraine, Russia and the United States seeking to broker an end to the war in Ukraine concluded on Wednesday in Abu Dhabi with Kyiv describing the negotiations as "substantive and productive".

While there was no apparent breakthrough in the most recent round of discussions, the negotiations were set to carry on into a second day, Kyiv said.

The U.S.-mediated talks are the latest in a flurry of diplomacy that has so far failed to strike a deal to halt the war, unleashed by Russia's February 2022 invasion.

The war has spiralled into Europe's deadliest conflict since the Second World War, with hundreds of thousands killed, millions forced to flee their homes in Ukraine and much of the eastern and southern part of the country decimated.

The talks were going on Wednesday as stepped-up Russian strikes on Ukraine's power infrastructure left Kyiv residents in darkness and cold, with temperatures dropping as low as -20 degrees Celsius.

But though the massive barrage threatened to overshadow progress, Ukraine's top negotiator Rustem Umerov said the talks the first day were "substantive and productive, focused on concrete steps and practical solutions".

As talks got under way, the Kremlin repeated its hardline demand that Kyiv give in if it wanted the four-year invasion to end.

"Our position is well known," Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov told presspersons on Wednesday.

"Until the Kyiv regime makes the appropriate decisions, the special military operation continues," he said.

The main sticking point in settling the conflict is the long-term fate of territory in eastern Ukraine.

Moscow is demanding that Kyiv pull its troops out of swathes of the Donbas, as a precondition of any deal.

It also wants international recognition that land seized in the invasion belongs to Russia.

Board of Secondary Education Rajasthan, Ajmer

Open tender for printing and supply of security based pre-printed computer stationery for Board are invited through e-procurement from the reputed firms. Estimated value Rs. 60 Lakh Last date of submission of bid is 18/02/2026 till 04.00 pm. Details of tender document is available on www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in and www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in
UBN : SEB2526WSOB00032

Secretary

Office of Managing Director,
Bureau for Facilitating MSMEs of Tamil Nadu (FaMeTN)
MSME Department, Government of Tamil Nadu
1st Floor, SIDCO Corporate Office Building, Thiru Vi Ka Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai-600032

The following tender proposal may be published in an English daily and a Tamil daily.

S. No.	Tendering Authority& Bid Submission Portal, Date of Issue and Bid Due Date (BDD) and time	Subject of Request for Proposal (RFP)
1	General Manager, FaMeTN **www.tntender.gov.in/** Bid issue Date 05.02.2026 Bid Due Date & Time: 23-02-2026 (5.00 PM)	Appointment of vendor to development of comprehensive platform (web and mobile application) TN MSME ONE for MSMEs and MSME department.

All subsequent communications will be available at the site mentioned above/FaMeTN (www.fametn.com) website. The RfP notifications will also be available at **www.tntenders.gov.in/.** RfPs can be downloaded till BDD and will be opened on the portal

www.tntenders.gov.in/ on the respective BDD. The processes are meant to be end-to-end electronic and all submissions except presentations for the RFPs will be entirely online to the maximum extent possible. The responses could be used for empanelling firms and experts for similar projects in FaMeTN, at the sole discretion of the Tender Accepting Authority.

Managing Director
Bureau for Facilitating MSMEs of Tamil Nadu

DIPR/726/Tender/2026

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND NEURO SCIENCES
INSTITUTE OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE
Bengaluru-560 029, India
Ph.: 080 – 2699 5708 / 5127 Website: www.nimhans.ac.in Email: recruitment@nimhans.net

No.NIMH/Rect/Group B&C/ADVT-3/2025-26 Date: 03.02.2026

NOTIFICATION

NIMHANS invites applications for the following vacant posts through online mode from Indian nationals residing in India and abroad with **last date on or before 04.03.2026 upto 04:30 PM.**

Sl. No.	Name of the post	No. of vacancy	Category	Pay level as per 7th CPC	Upper Age limit	Group
1	Senior Scientific Assistant (Human Genetics)	1	OBC-1	6	35	B
2	EEG Technician	3	ST-1, OBC-1, EWS-1	6	30	B
3	Library Assistant	3	SC-1, UR-2	6	30	B
4	Artist	1	OBC-1	5	27	C
5	Photographer	2	OBC-1, UR-1	5	27	C
6	Stenographer Grade -II	9	ST-1, OBC-1, EWS-2, UR-5	4	27	C
7	Assistant Instructor (Panchakarma)	4	OBC-1, UR-3	4	27	C
8	Medical Records Technician *	3	OBC-1, EWS-1, UR-1	4	27	C
9	Junior Secretarial Assistant	22	SC-5, EWS-2, UR-15	2	27	C
10	Hospital Assistant (Panchakarma)	2	UR-2	1	27	C
11	Barber	2	UR-2	1	27	C

*** The applications received vide previous Notification for this post vide notification No.NIMH/PER(6)/RECT/ADVT-1/2024-25 dated 16.07.2024 will also be considered against the current notification. However, such applicants are informed to send the additional educational qualifications, experience, latest caste certificate and NOC (applicable to in-service applicants) if any, after 17.08.2024 to be sent to the Director, NIMHANS, P.B.No.2900, Hosur Road, Bengaluru – 560 029 by duly mentioning the details of post applied previously without making any payment of application fee. Further, the calculation of cut off age for such applications for all categories will be considered as on 17.08.2024.**

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

- **NIMHANS reserves the right to introduce Skill Test for any of the post as mentioned above.**
- Fill the online application carefully after reading the given instructions.
- All applicant must go through the detailed advertisement, posts and eligibility and ensure that they are eligible in all respect before applying.
- The eligibility of the applicant will be provisional and merely filling the application form and appearing in examination shall not be treated as validity of eligibility and Candidature shall stands cancelled in case any ineligibility detected at any stage of recruitment process including after joining on an offered post.
- **Refer NIMHANS Website www.nimhans.ac.in for detailed Notification.**

Sd/-, DIRECTOR

WELCOME DISTRACTION

Was important to refresh before the final, says RCB skipper Smriti

FILE PHOTO: EMMANUAL YOGINI

RCB has had a six-day break going into the WPL final. The players took a three-day trip to Goa to recharge their batteries. "It was better that we were off for the first two or three days. I'm happy that everyone had that sort of a break and enjoyed it with each other and came back being fresh," skipper Smriti Mandhana said.

SUCCESS MANTRA

Putting team above self has taken the pressure off me, says Jemimah

VIJAY SONEJI

Jemimah Rodrigues flicked a switch during India's triumphant ODI World Cup campaign last year, and has now continued in the same vein. She felt captaincy has given a new direction to her game as she has been putting the team above self. "That has taken a lot of pressure off me and helped me not to overthink my game," she said.

HAPPY TO HELP

I'm glad I trusted the process and kept believing in my game: George

GETTY IMAGES

I'm happy I could contribute. I knew I was batting well, so the conversion definitely mattered. I'm glad I trusted the process and kept believing in my game. Everyone played to their full potential, and I'm very happy to see our top-order doing so well. We are looking forward to the big final — Aaron George.

NOT MY CUP OF TEA

Commentary is very difficult, I am not good with stats: Dhoni

FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Commentary is very difficult. There is a very fine line between describing the game and, in that process, getting into a zone where you start criticising individuals who are playing the game. It's a very thin line... I'm not good with stats, but there are a lot of people who are very good with stats — M.S. Dhoni.

Will it be fourth time lucky for the Delhi Capitals?

It has reached the summit clash in all three previous editions; Royal Challengers Bengaluru, armed with a slew of match-winners, will be hard to beat as it eyes a second trophy

WPL-4 FINAL

Vivek Krishnan
VADODARA

Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Delhi Capitals aren't in uncharted territory as they gear up for the final of the Women's Premier League on Thursday. Two seasons ago, it was these two teams that battled for the grand prize at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in Delhi. Smriti Mandhana and Co. emerged victorious then, spreading cheer among a fervent fanbase yearning for silverware.

Cut to the present, the circumstances ahead of the final at the Kotambi Stadium differ slightly.

Unlike in 2024, RCB qualified for the summit clash this time directly after topping the league standings.

It has led to a week-long build-up to the big game for the Bengaluru outfit. To allow the players to unwind for a bit before redirecting their energies to the task at hand, the team enjoyed a three-day breather in Goa immediately after its last game.

Capitals, on the other hand, have had to take a more arduous route. Having finished first in the league phase in the previous three seasons only to lose the final, Jemimah Rodrigues' side may not mind this scenario. After a feeble beginning to the campaign, the three-time runner-up has found all the pieces of the jigsaw coming together in recent matches.

In it to win it: Friendship will be put aside when Jemimah and Smriti eye glory for their respective outfits. VIJAY SONEJI

Besides handling the responsibility of captaincy with poise, Jemimah has exhibited exquisite touch with the willow of late. In a chase of 169 against Gujarat Giants in Tuesday's Eliminator, the 25-year-old's 23-ball 41 at No. 4 was essential in shutting out the hosts altogether. Lizelle Lee, Shafali Varma and Laura Wolvaardt are also in sparkling form.

For RCB, the fourth edition has been smooth-sailing. It won its first five games, and suffered a blip in the form of two defeats only after sealing its spot in the playoffs. In addition to Smriti, Grace Harris, Georgia Voll and Richa Ghosh are fully capable of swaying the outcome in RCB's favour with the bat. For the wickets, RCB will look towards Lauren Bell, Nadine de Klerk and Shreyanka Patil.

Will a repeat of 2024 unfold? Or will Capitals turn the tables? Either way, it will perhaps come down to fine margins.

I've grown a lot in the last 3-4 months: Jemimah

Vivek Krishnan
VADODARA

Smriti Mandhana and Jemimah Rodrigues would have sat beside each other in India's dressing room many times. On the eve of the 2026 Women's Premier League final, the two India stars sat next to each other as captains of Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Delhi Capitals, respectively. The glittering trophy, which is at stake on Thursday, was placed right in the middle.

Smriti has been here before – she led RCB to the title two seasons ago. While Jemimah has played three finals for Capitals, this is her first taste of leadership at the WPL.

For Capitals to enter a fourth straight final seemed out of bounds when they lost three of their first four games. But Jemimah has shown character while steering the ship. "In the last 3-4 months, I think I've grown the most. Especially in the last month as a captain. The best part about captaincy is that I have thought less about myself and more about the team," Jemimah said.

In RCB's run to the final, Smriti has also led by example. The ace opener shared the credit with Malolan Rangarajan, who is the franchise's head coach for the first time.

"Malo is extremely calm and composed. A lot of girls have enjoyed working with him and taken the calmness he brings to the team," she said.

Oozing class: George hit 15 boundaries and two sixes in his match-winning knock. GETTY IMAGES

George's century helps India ace record chase, enter final

U-19 WORLD CUP

Press Trust of India
HARARE

Aaron George's silken hundred seamlessly merged with the explosive fifties from IPL stars Vaibhav Suryavanshi and Ayush Mhatre as India stormed into the ICC under-19 World Cup final with a seven-wicket win over Afghanistan here on Wednesday.

India will face England in the summit clash here on Friday. It will be India's 10th final in the u-19 showpiece, a testimony to BCCI's structured junior cricket programme that unearths serious talent.

India seemed to have a tough task ahead once Afghanistan piled 310 for four, built around hundreds by Faisal Shinozada (110, 93b, 15x4) and Uzairullah Niazai (101 n.o., 86b, 12x4, 2x6). When India cantered home in 41.1 overs, it was the highest chase in the competition.

George (115, 104b, 15x4, 2x6) led the pursuit with a hundred of impeccable pace and precision placements of his shots.

He received ample backing from Suryavanshi (68, 33b, 9x4, 4x6) and Mhatre (62, 59b, 5x4, 4x6) as India kept its run-rate above seven all the while.

As is his vaunt, Suryavanshi gave a flying start to India's innings with a flurry of boundaries, mainly off off-spinner Wahidullah Zadran. There was a slice of fortune too when Niazai dropped the left-hander on 22 at point off Abdul Aziz.

The opening wicket alliance stopped at 93, but George then combined with Mhatre to add another 114 runs in just over 17 overs to take India past 200 in the 27th over. Mhatre, who has been struggling for his rhythm in this tournament, made a fifty at the right moment, displaying his full selection of shots.

Once again, George played the anchor's role to perfection as Mhatre took all the risks to keep his side much ahead of the asking rate.

Mhatre's dismissal did not deter George, and he batted on in a composed manner as has been doing in this innings.

Apart from his unflappability and situational awareness, the aesthetics of George's batting was also impressive. Not one shot was hit in anger, as the right-hander, who migrated from Kottayam, Kerala, to Hyderabad, batted with elan.

The scores: Afghanistan 310/4 in 50 overs (Shinozada 110, Niazai 101 n.o.) lost to India 311/3 in 41.1 overs (George 115, Suryavanshi 68, Mhatre 62). **Toss:** Afghanistan; **PoM:** George.

Three contenders make Group D the most exciting

T20 WC COUNTDOWN

N. Sudarshan

For the purists, a World Cup comes only once in four years. It gives the winner adequate time to savour the success while it provides the vanquished enough time to reflect and regroup. Not to be missed is the majestic ring to the words 'quadrennial extravaganza'.

But T20 cricket is no purists' delight. And the associated World Cup comes every two years. In fact, the upcoming edition in India and Sri Lanka will be played within 20 months of the previous tournament in the United States and West Indies.

One team that will not be complaining is South Africa. In the 2024 final against India, the Proteas had victory in sight at 151 for four chasing 177, only to go home empty-handed. Catharsis can come quickly in 2026. It helps that South Africa is more pedigreed now, having won the ICC World Test Championship in 2025 and shed the tag of a chronic underachiever.

In terms of personnel, there is no Heinrich Klaasen, but leader Aiden Markram has an equally devastating batter in Dewald Brevis, and superlative cricketers in Quinton de Kock, 36-year-old David Miller –probably playing his last World Cup – and Tristan Stubbs.

In contrast, the bowling seems a tad underwhelming, but Kagiso Rabada, Marco Jansen and Keshav Maharaj are notable names, and they will be desperate to live up to their reputation.

The buzz: While Markram's South Africa will be aiming for catharsis, Santner's New Zealand and Rashid's Afghanistan have a tussle on their hands for a Super Eight spot. AFP, FILE PHOTOS: AFP & AP

The Group D schedule

Date	Teams	Venue	Time
Feb. 8	New Zealand vs. Afghanistan	Chennai	11 a.m.
Feb. 9	South Africa vs. Canada	Ahmedabad	7 p.m.
Feb. 10	New Zealand vs. UAE	Chennai	3 p.m.
Feb. 11	South Africa vs. Afghanistan	Ahmedabad	11 a.m.
Feb. 13	Canada vs. UAE	Delhi	3 p.m.
Feb. 14	New Zealand vs. South Africa	Ahmedabad	7 p.m.
Feb. 16	Afghanistan vs. UAE	Delhi	11 a.m.
Feb. 17	New Zealand vs. Canada	Chennai	11 a.m.
Feb. 18	South Africa vs. UAE	Delhi	11 a.m.
Feb. 19	Afghanistan vs. Canada	Chennai	7 p.m.

Bad memories

The Kiwis, too, have some bad memories to erase, like their non-qualification out of the group stage in 2024. But they have a capable squad, with fierce top-order hitters in Finn Allen and Tim Seifert, and middle-order musclemen in Glenn Phillips and Daryl Mitchell. Most recently, Allen smashed a 38-ball 80 against India in Thiruvananthapuram while Seifert a 36-ball 62 in Visakhapatnam.

In skipper Mitchell Santner and Ish Sodhi, New Zealand has two spinners who can cash in if the Chepauk wicket retains its traditionally slow nature. But pace department can be a problem. Adam Milne is out while Lockie Ferguson and Matt Henry are expected to go on paternity leave during the tournament.

The presence of Rashid Khan's Afghanistan makes Group D the most exciting. The Asian side pipped New Zealand last time around, then beat Bangladesh and Australia to reach the semi-finals. A young squad, with enough resources to revel in spin-friendly sub-continental conditions, will hope for a redux.

Afghanistan has beaten the West Indies 2-1 in the lead-up, but exited last year's Asia Cup in the group-stage, a repeat it would like to avoid at the global level.

Canada and UAE will look to be more than just also rans. The former made its T20 World Cup debut in 2024 but won just one match. It breezed through the Americas-region qualifiers in mid-2025 to punch its 2026 ticket, but has played no T20Is since then.

For the United Arab Emirates, it's a third T20 World Cup. Though it has won just a solitary match from six outings, it has done well in the shortest format in the last one year, as seen in its famous 2-1 series win over Bangladesh in May 2025, and the spirited effort against Pakistan in the Asia Cup.

Red-hot Kishan makes opener's slot his own

Amol Karhadkar
NAVI MUMBAI

Four days after their last international outing and three days before the start of their T20 World Cup title defence, the Men in Blue took the field on Wednesday for their lone warm-up game. The biggest takeaway from the outing was a strong signal from the team management: Ishan Kishan over Sanju Samson as opener-wicketkeeper.

After Suryakumar Yadav elected to bat at the Dr. D.Y. Patil Stadium against South Africa, Kishan walked out to open alongside Abhishek Sharma. While Abhishek played second fiddle, Kishan picked up right where he had left off in Thiruvananthapuram four nights earlier.

Lungi Ngidi pitched it full in the opening over and was dispatched over the ropes twice with authority.

Anrich Nortje then tested Kishan with short stuff, only for the left-hander to swivel into a stylish, one-legged pull that sailed over deep fine-leg. The ball kept flying as Kishan tore into the South African attack before being retired out for a blistering 53 (20b, 2x4, 7x6).

That knock may well have slammed the door shut on Samson's hopes of finally getting game-time in a T20 World Cup opener – this time at the Wankhede Stadium on Saturday. The message became even clearer when Tilak Varma, returning from a testicular surgery that had ruled him out of the New Zealand series, was sent in to bat with two balls remaining in the PowerPlay after Kishan's retirement.

Later, Harshit Rana hobbled his way out of the ground after bowling a solitary over. He pulled out of his run-up twice before holding his knee and gently walking off the field.

The scores:
India 240/6 in 20 overs (Kishan 53, Tilak 45, Axar 35 n.o.) bt South Africa 210/7 in 20 overs (Rickelton 44, Stubbs 45 n.o.). **Toss:** India.

INBRIEF

Mirabai sets three new National records

Mirabai Chanu set three new National records as she totalled 205kg to win the women's 48kg title on the opening day of the National weightlifting championships at Modinagar on Wednesday. The 31-year-old Mirabai – who dropped down to 48kg following the rejig in weight classes last year – equalled her personal best total which she had achieved in 49kg at 2021 Asian championships.

The results (winners only): Women: Elite: 48kg: Mirabai Chanu (Mani) snatch 89kg, clean and jerk 116kg, total 205kg; **Junior:** Vani Puri (Pun) 78kg, 96kg, 174kg; **Youth:** Pungni Tara (SSCB) 68kg, 90kg, 158kg; **44kg:** Youth: Parishmita Gogoi (SSCB) 63kg, 74kg, 137kg.

Advani finishes runner-up in Asian snooker championship

China's Deng Haohui dethroned Pankaj Advani as the Asian snooker champion, getting the better of the Indian 4-1 [0-126(96), 101(68)-17, 114(106)-8, 65-22, 70 (70)-61 (60)] in the final in Doha.

Blue Tigresses notch up third friendly win in Turkiye

The Indian senior women's national team beat Russian side Zvezda-2005 Perm 2-0 in a friendly match in Antalya on Wednesday.

The result: India 2 (Anju Tamang 9, Lynda Kom Serto 89) bt Zvezda-2005 Perm 0.

India thrashes Bhutan, to meet Bangladesh in final

The Indian under-17 team crushed Bhutan 8-0 in its last round-robin fixture of the SAFF under-19 women's football championship to set up a final against Bangladesh, at Pokhara on Wednesday.

The result: India 8 (Alisha Lyngdoh 6, Abhista Basnett 10, Pearl Fernandes 16, 39, 41, Divyani Linda 17, Pritika Barman 25, 90) bt Bhutan 0.

AFC confirms India's bid to host 2031 Asian Cup

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) on Wednesday confirmed India's bid to host the Asian Cup in 2031, having listed the country among the six bidding member nations. India will compete with Australia, Indonesia, Korea, Kuwait and there is also a joint bid from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Milan closes gap on Inter with win over Bologna

AC Milan closed the gap on Inter at the top of Serie A with a 3-0 win at Bologna on Tuesday.

The result: Bologna 0 lost to AC Milan 3 (Loftus-Cheek 20, Nkunku 39-pen, Rabiot 48).

Hitesh and Preeti power India's good start

India opened its campaign in emphatic fashion at the BOXAM Elite International 2026in La Nucia (Spain).

The results: Women: 54kg: Preeti bt Aliaskar Symbat (Kaz) 5-0; **57kg:** Prachi bt Vanesa Morell Ramirez (Esp) 5-0. **60kg:** Priya bt Alessia Mansuetto (Can) 5-0; **65kg:** Kajal bt Assem Tanatar (Kaz) 4-1.
Men: 60kg: Mohammed Hussam Uddin bt Matias Mehmet Buyukdemir (Den) 4-1, Sachin bt Brandon Alejandro (Esp) 5-0; **65kg:** Aditya Pratap lost to Joe Turner (Eng) 1-4; **65kg:** Abhinash Jamwal bt Qalid Osman (Den) 5-0; **70kg:** Hitesh Gulia bt Finn Bos (Ned) 5-0, **70kg:** Deepak bt Hornel Ayitevi (Bel) 4-1; **75kg:** Akash bt Nikita Zakkharchenko (Ukr) 4-1; **80kg:** Ankush bt Malsawmtluanga 4-1.

Shooting League of India's first season postponed

The inaugural season of the Shooting League of India has been rescheduled to a later date this year after the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) decided to undertake a strategic realignment of the competition.

Anthony pleased to bring happiness to his mother

'Once dad passed away, life was tough for her. I know she's very happy now. She's got a smile on her face to see the two boys playing here in the World Cup'

T20 WORLD CUP

S. Prasanna Venkatesan
CHENNAI

Inspiration: Anthony grew up playing grade cricket in Sydney, admiring and wanting to emulate Ponting's pull shot. R. RAGU

It is hard to measure what Italy's history-making T20 World Cup qualification meant to everyone involved – players, coaches, and supporters scattered across continents. For Anthony Joseph Mosca, though, its weight settled in one simple truth: it made his mother happy. It brought pride to her voice, a smile to her face, and tears to her eyes. In that moment, history felt human.

"At the qualifiers in Holland, mum sent a video through. All the parents had to send videos to the players about how proud they were. And it brought a tear to my mum's eye.

"Once dad passed away, life was tough for her. I know she's very happy now. She's got a smile on her face to see the two boys playing here in the World Cup," said Anthony after Italy's 10-run win over Canada in the warm-up match here on Monday.

Openers Anthony and his brother Justin (left-hander) are from Australia, but their roots remain firmly Italian. "Our parents and grandparents were born in Italy," he said. "For many of us in this team, our families are from Italy. We have a lot of Italian heritage (in the team). So, Italian was the first language in some of our households."

Cricket, however, came through Australia, where Anthony grew up playing grade cricket in Sydney, admiring and wanting to emulate Ricky Ponting's pull shot and Damien Martyn's cover drive.

He didn't fully grasp the scale of Italian cricket until just before COVID. "The federation contacted Ben Manenti. And Benny passed on my name and my brother's," he recalled. Though the pandemic paused his travel, the commitment remained. "They told us the steps it would take to get to this level and we were prepared to take that on."

That journey has been eased by familiarity. Alongside his brother are the Manenti brothers, Ben and Harry – friends first, teammates later. "We played cricket together back in Australia. We played at the same grade club in Sydney. For the last 15 years, we've been close mates – brothers, not by blood."

Italy's World Cup debut carries a rare symmetry: two sets of brothers, bound by blood and friendship, turning familiarity into strength, and history into something shared.

Top of the pile: 10m air pistol women's champ Esha flanked by Cheng and Yu. X@OFFICIALNRAI

Esha wins women's 10m air pistol gold at Asian meet

SHOOTING

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

Esha Singh bagged a second individual career gold at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range here on day one of the Asian Rifle / Pistol Championship. She won the 10m air pistol women's event with a score of 239.8 on Wednesday.

The Hyderabad shooter, who had won the event two years back in Jakarta as well, was seventh after the first series of five shots before climbing up the ladder and taking a decisive lead after the 19th shot of the 24-shot final. Two Taiwan shooters, Cheng Yen-Ching and Yu Ai-Wen, claimed silver and bronze respectively.

Reigning World champion Samrat Rana won the men's 10m air pistol bronze. Uzbekistan's Vladimir Svechnikov won gold with an effort of 242.0 while Kazakhstan's Valeriy Rakhimzan finished a point behind. Samrat's score was 220.3.

India also won the air pistol women's team gold as Esha, Manu Bhaker and Suruchi Singh combined for an effort of 1726, 13 better than the silver-winning Vietnamese. The trio of Samrat, Sharvan Kumar and Varun Tomar won silver in the men's air pistol team event.

Like Esha, Jonathan Gavin Antony also won two gold medals on the day in the 10m air pistol junior men's category. He won the individual contest with a score of 240.9 and combined with Chirag Sharma and Priyanshu Yadav for the team gold.

India, in all, won a total of nine medals on the opening day.

Bright start: Tanvi rolled to a facile victory over Myanmar's Thuzar. X@BADMINTON_ASIA

Contrasting wins for Indian men, women

BADMINTON

Press Trust of India
QINGDAO (CHINA)

Indian men overcame a strong challenge from Singapore, while the women dominated Myanmar in their opening group stage matches to secure quarterfinal berths in the Badminton Asia Team Championships here on Wednesday.

The results: Men: India bt Singapore 3-2 (Lakshya Sen lost to Loh Kean Yew 16-21, 21-19, 16-21; Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Chirag Shetty bt Eng Keat Wesley Koh & Junsuke Kubo 21-10, 21-8; Ayush Shetty bt Jia Heng Jason Teh 21-17, 21-15; Pruthvi Roy & K. Sai Pratheek lost to Nge Joo Jie & Donovan Willard Wee 21-8, 21-23, 20-22; K. Srikanth bt Jia Wei Joel Koh 21-15, 21-16).
Women: Group Y: India bt Myanmar 5-0 (Tanvi Sharma bt Thet Htar Thuzar 21-13, 21-16; Rakshitha Sree Santhosh Ramraj bt Eaint Chit Phoo 21-12, 21-6; Malvika Bansod bt Lin Lin Htet 21-19, 21-12; Priya Konjengbam & Shruti Mishra bt Su Latt & Thuzar 21-15, 21-16; Treesa Jolly & Gayatri Gopi Chand bt Htet & Phoo 21-8, 21-6).

Semenistaja overcomes Hontama, makes the last-eight stage

MUMBAI OPEN

Tarun Shastry
MUMBAI

Top seed Darja Semenistaja, a champion here in 2024, showcased her ability to stay composed as she edged past Japan's Mai Hontama 6-4, 7-6(3) in a gripping Round-of-16 encounter in the L&T Mumbai Open 125K Series at the Maharashtra State Lawn Tennis Association courts on Wednesday.

Hontama burst out of the blocks with aggression, pinning Semenistaja behind the baseline and forcing a stream of errors with her depth and pace.

The Japanese dictated early rallies, but the Latvian responded with heavy topspin forehands, flat backhand winners, and a strong first serve to claim the first set 6-4.

The second set saw momentum swing repeatedly.

Cruise mode: Third seed Jeanjean had it easy against Kuramochi. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Semenistaja began to impose herself with a heavier serve and sharp returns, but Hontama raised her level once again, dragging the left-hander across the court with well-angled volleys to take a 3-1 lead.

Refusing to relent, the 23-year-old Latvian dug deep and unleashed a combination of blistering forehands and well-timed net approaches to reel off three consecutive games and go ahead 4-3.

Amid extended baseline rallies, feathered drop shots and exquisite slices, Hontama briefly seized the initiative to lead 5-4 after winning two tight games, but Semenistaja fought back, levelling at 5-5, before surging ahead 6-5 with a series of outstanding forehand winners and a skidding backhand slice; the Japanese, however, held serve to force a tie-breaker.

Semenistaja took control, using controlled aggression and a heavy first serve, to win the tie-break 7-3 and book a place in the quarterfinals.

Later, third seed Leolia Jeanjean made light work of her clash against Japan's Miho Kuramochi.

The French ace, who has a career high ranking of 91, prevailed 6-3, 6-3.

Other results (round-of-16): Mei Yamaguchi (Jpn) bt Yasmine Kabbaj (Mar) 4-6, 6-4, 7-6(5); Mananchaya Sawangkaew (Tha) bt Misaki Matsuda (Jpn) 6-4, 6-1.
Doubles (quarterfinals): Polina Latcenko (Rus) & Elena Pridankina (Rus) bt Prarthana Thombare & Albertina Ibragimova (Rus) 6-1, 6-1.
Hiroko Kuwata (Jpn) & Park So-hyun (Kor) bt Darja Semenistaja (Lat) & Zuzanna Pawlikowska (Pol) 6-0, 6-4.

Getting into the groove

Will he, won't he? Amidst uncertainty about Sumit Nagal's fitness ahead of India's Davis Cup Qualifiers first round against Netherlands this weekend, India's highest ranked singles player hit the KSLTA courts in Bengaluru for a practice session. Nagal's availability will be confirmed at the draw ceremony to will be held on Friday. K. MURALI KUMAR

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Ginpaul and Mansi advance

Top seeds Ginpaul Sonna and Mansi Singh easily progressed to the singles round of 32 at the Yonex-Sunrise All India senior ranking badminton tournament here. While Sonna beat Sankalp Chandragurala 21-11, 21-14, Mansi defeated Disha Santosh 21-12, 21-14.

Rajesh nets two in RWF FC's narrow victory

S. Rajesh scored a brace as RWF FC edged out Jawahar Union FC 3-2 in the BDFA B-division football league here on Wednesday.

The results:
Stride FC 1 (Ginneithang Gangte 81) drew with Blitz FC 1 (Ashansh Prasad 34); RWF FC 3 (Jayavandan Sigamani 42, S. Rajesh 56, 82) bt Jawahar Union FC 2 (Manggoulal Kipgen 33, Raj Gaikwad 61); FC Deccan 3 (S. Sai Srujan 23, 33, Mohammed Zain Ul Abideen 72) bt Income Tax FC 1 (Narendra Kumar 12); Sniper FC 3 (Don Davis 22, 48, Abhil A. Thanan 68) bt Real Chikkamagalur FC 0.

Amruth, Shri Bhagwan excel in Dooravani Cricketers (2)'s big win

S. Amruth (139 n.o.) and Shri Bhagwan Singh (5/38) starred for Dooravani Cricketers (2) as it beat BUCC (2) by 168 runs in the KSCA (Group I) fifth division tournament.

The scores: Dooravani Cricketers (2) 325/7 in 50 overs (S. Amruth 139 n.o., B. Harsha 57, Aryansh Singh 4/43) bt BUCC (2) 157 in 29.2 overs (Shri Bhagwan Singh 5/38).
Oriental 183 in 46.2 overs (Abhishek Kumar Singh 57, Pratheesh Premdas 46, Raghuveer Rajpurohit 5/16) bt Bangalore Sports 162 in 38.5 overs (S. Santosh Kumar 56, Gurram Ravikanth 5/43).
Government Arts College 147 in 32.3 overs (S. Gowtham 78) lost to Star Cricketers XI 151/4 in 17.4 overs (Prashanth Giridhara 50 n.o., S. Vinay 50 n.o.).
Head Quarters 181/8 in 34 overs (R. Ajay 32, S. Chethan Reddy 38) lost to BMS Engineering College 182/9 in 39.3 overs (N. Karan 50).
Young Boys, Kolar 135 in 33.1 overs (A.M. Srihari 53, Suhaan Bhandary 5/37) lost to Kengeri Cricketers 136/3 in 28.3 overs (N. Yeshwanth 48, Rahul G. Raju 46 n.o.).
Friends 131 in 45 overs (A. Arjun 49, Inbarasaganan Bharathi 5/21) lost to Vivekanagar Cricketers 132/3 in 20.2 overs [Aakash Suresh 25, M. Kishore 61 n.o.).
Anekal Town 264 in 46.3 overs (Sridhar 54, Venkatesh 59, Yashwantha 55) bt Deccan United 140 in 32.2 overs.

LIVE TELECAST

WPL: Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.